CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
3 1924 082 469 515

DATE DUE

AUG 31 '83 AU 18			
MAY 8 '85			
GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U.S.A.

CORNELL
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

WILLARD FISKE
ENDOWMENT

Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924082469515

THE POLISH PEASANT IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

VOLUME II

PRIMARY-GROUP ORGANIZATION

THE POLISH PEASANT IN EUROPE *and* AMERICA

MONOGRAPH OF AN IMMIGRANT GROUP

By

WILLIAM I. THOMAS

and

FLORIAN ZNANIECKI

VOLUME II

PRIMARY-GROUP ORGANIZATION

BOSTON

RICHARD G. BADGER

THE GORHAM PRESS

A558752

CONTENTS

PAGE

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MEMBERS OF FAMILY-GROUPS—*Continued* 1

Kozłowski Series 1

Jackowski Series 30

Kanikuła Series 48

Topolski Series 53

Sękowski Series 61

Makowski Series . . . 80

Cugowski Series 89

Barszczewski Series 108

Halicki Series 121

Rzepkowski Series 139

Kalinowicz Series 149

Wickowski Series 158

Serczyński Series 164

Terlecki Series 170

Raczkowski Series 180

Rembieńska Series . . . 249

Butkowski Series . . . 256

Radwański Series 266

Dobiecki Series 273

Konstancya Walerych Series 277

Feliks P. Series 281

Winkowski Series 283

INDIVIDUAL LETTERS AND FRAGMENTS OF LETTERS SHOWING THE DISSOLUTION OF FAMILIAL SOLIDARITY 288

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES 296

Pawlak Series 298

Kukiełka Series 303

Jankoski Series 309

Łazowska Series 311

Olszak Series 316

Starkiewicz Series 321

COPYRIGHT 1918 BY RICHARD G. BADGER

All Rights Reserved

D/in
DK
411
T46
Vol. 2

Fiske plate

THE GORHAM PRESS, BOSTON, U. S. A

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MEMBERS OF FAMILY-GROUPS.—*Continued*

KOZŁOWSKI SERIES

The Kozłowskis are a poor family in the province of Łomża. At his death the father left a small farm of two morgs—possibly inherited from his mother. The widow, Franciszka, remained on the farm with the youngest boy, Franek. One daughter (stepdaughter?) of Franciszka married a shoemaker of the same village. The position of a village shoemaker is rather bad, and this explains the apparent cupidity of the daughter. The other children had gone to America. Meanwhile there had remained undivided a farm left by Franciszka's late husband's father, and the trouble begins with the division of this land. In the division six morgs of land are added to the small farm of Franciszka. She has no right to sell these 6 morgs, but at the same time she wishes to get as much profit from the situation as possible, and, on the other hand, she is really not in a position to take care of the whole farm until Franek grows up. The shoemaker's wife has a right to part of the value of the whole farm and she claims her share, but Franciszka wants to pay her only a sum corresponding to her part of the original farm of two morgs, and wishes to drive a sharp bargain even then. Her first plan is to sell the farm, conceal as much money as possible for herself, and go to America to be supported there by her children. But the children are unwilling to give her power of attorney; they seem rightly to distrust her. Then, as the opportunity to marry presents itself, she changes her plans, sells whatever can be sold without legal authority, gets money from her children to join them in America, invents pretexts for not going, gets

PAGE

Kluch Series 328
Struciński Series 332
Borkowski Series 343
Porzycki Series 375
Jabłkowski Series 406
PERSONAL RELATIONS OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY . . 433
Hejmej Series 435
Pedewski Series. 441
Kazimierz F. Series 445
Arciszewski Series 449
Kowalski Series. 455
Fryzowicz Series 462
Osiniak Series 469
Krupa Series 483
Piotrowski Series 503
Lipniacki Series 567
Jasiński Series 576
INDEX 589

children in America are, of course, less under her power, but even they cannot quite avoid her influence. The letters give us a good idea of the means by which the social environment may be controlled through merely psychological influences, without any socially acknowledged right to control—one of the practical problems of the peasant woman and solved by many of them in the same way as by Kozłowska.

The fundamental device is, of course, the appeal to sentiment. Kozłowska uses it artistically. In order to appreciate this we must remember the peasants' tendency to schematize people and things. Every person belongs to a certain determined social type and is presumed to have the attitudes of this type; every person has a determined position, and from this position conclusions about his behavior may be drawn. The surest way to provoke a desired sentimental reaction in the environment is therefore to assume and to keep consistently a character corresponding to the sentiment it is desired to provoke. Thus, for example, a noble, a priest, a teacher, an official, a newspaper man, an agitator, wishing to win the attachment of the peasants, must each act in a different way. There are also reactions which only a person in a determined position can arouse. For instance, envy is most easily awakened in peasants by a peasant. A priest or a noble will hardly succeed in provoking pity, etc.

Now, Kozłowska has a determined character and she tries to arouse only such feelings as are habitual with regard to a person of this character. She is a widow and therefore presumed to be helpless. The supposition of helplessness has a stronger basis, because she is old and formally poor, i.e., she has little which is rightfully her own. Further, she is a mother and grandmother, and supposed to have the feelings of love, longing for her absent children, grief for a child's death, anxiety for her grandchildren when they

married, and tries to keep the whole farm for her youngest son, while getting in addition as much money as possible from the sale of the forest and stock. She succeeds perfectly, and is evidently too clever for her children. They not only get no money from her, but she succeeds in getting some from them. Ultimately she conciliates even her most dangerous antagonists, the shoemaker and his wife.

All this shows no lack of maternal feeling. On the contrary, she shows that feeling on the occasion of her daughter's death. But she has a powerful personality, and she has probably been independent for a long time; she has governed her environment, and she does not wish to fall into the position of an old, helpless, and moneyless mother, supported by her children. And as having some money herself is the only way of keeping her independence, she endeavors by all means to get it. As a woman, she has not the same tradition of familial solidarity as men; she is not the head of the family, the rightful manager of the common property; there are no rights and responsibilities of leadership to set limits to her egotism. The family-group as a distinct whole does not exist for her; she means to deal always only with individuals and opposes to them her own individuality. In so far the case is different from that of the old Wróblewski, who shows a much more far-going moral degeneration, since he is the head of a family and nevertheless breaks off all relations with his sons.

The influence of Franciszka's personality upon her environment is very well shown by the circumstance that everybody who comes into immediate touch with her finally does whatever she wishes. Her youngest son is under her absolute control; her *kuma*, Maryanna Szczepańska, is dominated; her second husband manifests a real devotion to her; even the stepdaughter and the shoemaker are subjugated, though not without protest. Her brothers and

The second typical means of control is the use of the feelings aroused, instead of rational arguments. In asking for anything or in explaining her conduct Kozłowska does not rely upon the strength of her arguments. On the contrary, she seems to avoid intentionally the real issue and instead creates around the problem an atmosphere of sentiment favorable to her. It is hardly a fully conscious, rationally motivated policy, any more than is her ability to provoke the desired feelings; both are certainly naïve. Her use of sentiment instead of argument is also largely due to her insufficient training in argumentation. Most of her arguments, are, in fact, rather weak, and in this respect she is also a type. The essential features of her argumentation are almost universal, not only among women, but also among men of the peasant class, and this is precisely the argumentation which is most efficient with peasants. In order to demonstrate something rationally, we must not only be able to develop a logically perfect chain of reasoning, but must also have an opponent able to follow this reasoning to acknowledge its binding character; and first of all, we must have identical premises. But a peasant opponent is not trained to follow a line of reasoning, is not accustomed to accept a thing as true solely because it has been demonstrated to him. And even if he admits a premise explicitly, he has always some other implicit premises which he keeps intentionally unexpressed and which invalidate in his mind his opponent's conclusion. So it is a difficult task to get the peasant to accept your argument. But if, with regard to a given problem, you succeed in arousing a set of feelings favorable to your view, the work is done, for the peasant will *himself invent* arguments which will persuade him. This is the mechanism used consciously by all those who want to influence the peasant, and they imitate it from the half-conscious

become orphans, etc. The type of favorable reaction which she can easily provoke in her environment is thus predetermined; it is pity for her helplessness and sympathy for her maternal feelings. And, indeed, she plays continually those two chords. And she does it with just the intensity required by the social milieu to which she belongs. In a more cultivated milieu, more accustomed to restrain the feelings, her behavior would appear highly unnatural, distasteful, and hysterical. Perhaps she is in fact a little hysterical, but certainly her behavior is adapted to her social sphere—one accustomed to a display of feelings. She has nothing to lose and much to win by exaggeration; therefore she exaggerates her helplessness as well as her motherly love, her poverty and her (certainly unreal) bad health, her grief and her gratitude.

Of course, her actions are not in accordance with her assumed character; but she knows like a master how to present them in a suitable light. The gradual selling of the forest is given as the result of her poverty and inability to farm. When she wants the farm sold, she appeals to her oldest son as her "guardian" and pretends to acknowledge his authority. When she marries, she pretends that she was forced to it by her helplessness. Her anger against "the shoemaker's wife" is justified by her motherly indignation, because of the invectives and curses which the stepdaughter hurls against her children. And the hardest blow to her is the—just or unjust—allegation of immoral conduct, which tends to wreck completely her assumed character.

But she knows also how to use other weapons. She appeals to religious feelings—by using in a clever way the name of God, by sending religious tokens, by exploiting the magical fear of a mother's curse, by presenting other people's duties toward her in a religious form, etc. Expressions of indignation and pride alternate with appeals to pity and strengthen each other by contrast.

and the same social group, they agree perfectly with each other, particularly as there are no practical problems to divide them. The necessity of such a friendship is felt mostly in older age by women who do not know how to adapt themselves to the young generation, and who begin to feel solitary in their own families. Of course if there is a close and harmonious relation between husband and wife such a friendship has less occasion to arise, and indeed we do not find it in most of our series. In their relation the old women manifest much mutual adulation, and this shows that their friendship has still another function; it is their only way of getting social recognition of the kind and degree they desire. It seems to be a tacit pact between them always to praise, never to blame each other. They behave in the same way when speaking about each other, and Maryanna's letters are good examples of this behavior.

Old men, like old bulls, do not care much for society. Their social standing is more assured, their instinct of domination finds place enough in the family, their familial attitude does not allow them to initiate strangers into their home affairs, and they do not need any help against their families. After their retirement the situation changes, and then we find them sometimes associated in friendship with retired neighbors of the same age. The usual consequence of retirement, however, is to strengthen the bonds between husband and wife.

THE FAMILY KOZŁOWSKI

Franciszka Kozłowska, a widow
Antoni (Antoś), her son, living in America
Franek (Franciszek), her son, living with her
Józef Plata, her second husband
Marysia (Mania) Baranowska
Zosia Bieniewska
Julcia Brzostowicz
} her daughters, living with their husbands in America

procedure of the peasants themselves, of which Kozłowska gives a good example.

The third means which the old woman uses to obtain what she wants is to be as exacting as possible. She not only does not give her children what is due to them, but she continually demands money from them, and not only from them but even from her brothers, who have no obligation whatever toward her. She simply reverses the situation, making demands which the others might naturally make. It can be understood then that under these conditions her son-in-law, instead of claiming his wife's dowry, would be satisfied if she sent him back his own money, or her son would be satisfied if she let him alone. The principle is the same as in bargaining, which is a general characteristic of the peasant as well as of the Jew. In their dealings with the manor-owners the peasants' claims are sometimes impudent. They do not expect those claims to be granted, but they hope to get at least something. In many cases the source of this unlimited exacting is found in a curious psychological identification of wish and right. Thus, the peasants' wish to get the land of the nobility gives rise to a half-determined, sometimes even fully determined and rationally justified, conception that they have the right to this land. In Kozłowska's case certainly there is much of this attitude. We find it also in most family quarrels about property, and in many lawsuits.

Among the other personalities in this series the most interesting is perhaps the *kuma* (Marysia's godmother), Maryanna Szczepańska. She is notable because of the nature of her friendship with Franciszka. This kind of old women's friendship is very frequent. It is based upon a community of interests and attitudes. The women seek in each other a help against their respective families and comfort in domestic troubles, and, being of the same generation

nothing at all.[1] Now, dear children, I inform you that she writes letters to America, and particularly to Antoni. Moreover, through acquaintances she sends messages against me. And now Antoś has not written to me for more than 3 months [as a result of this slandering]. And perhaps, dear daughter and son-in-law, dear children, perhaps they [Antoś and wife] don't know that you wish to take me to America, and they don't know. But, dear daughter and son-in-law, don't be angry with me for the thing which I shall mention. Dear children, I could not get to America for my money. Why, and I should not go without my son who is with me. Dear daughter and son-in-law, perhaps you will send me a ship-ticket. Dear children, sign, all of you, that you want me to come. For perhaps you want me to come, dear daughter and son-in-law, and perhaps those [the son and daughter-in-law] don't want me to come at all.[2] Dear daughter, I ask you whether you received that letter in which were the scapularies and the veil of God's Mother? You say, dear daughter

[1] One of the main sources of the innumerable and interminable lawsuits. Whenever in a dispute one party goes to court, or so much as threatens with a lawsuit, it is enough to harden the other party against all persuasion, even if he knows that he is totally wrong. But at the last moment, before the suit comes to trial a reaction usually comes—reflection and fear of losing—and if there are mediators the matter is frequently settled at this moment. Much depends also upon the judge, whether he is able to give the whole affair an *unofficial* form and to persuade the parties to agree. Therefore the country judges use as little formality as possible, for if once the matter is put upon a formal basis it ceases to be a question of right or wrong and becomes a mere fight. The lawsuits between family members must be considered from this point of view. As long as the matter remains within the family, agreement is always possible upon any basis; the peasant is ready not only to acknowledge any just claim but even to make any sacrifice. But as soon as the question assumes a formal character no considerations of justice, and in general none of the moral norms regulating the family life are applied at all; the law is outside of morals. An attitude which would be judged immoral, unjust, sinful, from the standpoint of familial or communal relations, is *not judged at all*, by any moral standards in legal relations. And this attitude is not always unconscious. A peasant who was in the midst of a lawsuit with his brother, and who was evidently and absolutely in the wrong from the standpoint of justice, replied, when we pointed this out to him: "Why, they did not want it settled *by the way of justice!*" meaning that they went at once to court instead of trying to get his consent in an amiable way.

[2] This request may have two aims. She either wants to be assured that in any case she will be supported in America, or she wants to have a document which, while not equivalent to legal authority, may still enable her to dispose of a part of the property or to persuade the guardians to let her do so.

"The shoemaker's wife," her daughter or stepdaughter
Antoni Hermanowicz, "the shoemaker"
Wincenty, Antoni } Franciszka's brothers (or brothers-in-law)
Maryanna Szczepańska, Franciszka's *kuma*

226–45. MAINLY FROM FRANCISZKA KOZŁOWSKA IN POLAND, TO MEMBERS OF HER FAMILY IN AMERICA. 237–38, FROM MARYANNA SZCZEPAŃSKA; 230, 239–41, FROM FRANEK; 242–43, FROM JÓZEF PLATA; 244–45, FROM ANTONI HERMANOWICZ

226 DANIŁOWO, March 15, 1906

[TO MARYSIA AND JAN BARANOWSKI] In the first words of my letter I speak to you with these godly words, "Praised be Jesus Christus," and I hope that you will answer me "In centuries of centuries, Amen." . . . .

I inform you, dear children, about my grief. Were it not for my soul for which I am anxious lest I lose it in eternity, I should have drowned myself, and you would have nobody to write to any more. Dear children, I write to you and I don't see these letters from crying. I am only glad from your letter that you intend to take me to America. There perhaps I should still live some years more. But, dear daughter and son-in-law, make some plan about all this.

Dear daughter and son-in-law, the worst is the forest, for I could find some farmer for [renting] the field, but the worst is about the forest. People would cut it down [steal the wood in my absence]. Dear children, you said in your first letter that you would take me, so take me indeed, I beg you heartily.

Dear children, I describe to you my grief. On the same day when I received that letter from you, I received also a notification from the bailiff that the shoemaker's wife wants it [the farm] sold at auction, and the auction will be on March 21. Now, dear children, when we were at the court, I asked them: "How much do you want to be paid off." She said 60, and he [her husband] said 70. She said that she wanted not only [the inheritance] after her father, but also after her grandfather. I offered her 50. But now I will give her nothing at all. Let her go by [the way of] lawsuits, I will give her

want to buy it, as it is in good order, the forest and the field. For the 2 morgs of forest they would give now 400 roubles, and for the 6 morgs of land they would give perhaps 300. And perhaps they would give more.[1]

My dear children, consult one another and write me, how I shall do. But it would be the best, my dear son Antoś, if it were your head, for you are my guardian. Arrange it so that we may sell it and that you may take me and Franek to America, for I don't wish to farm here. I have the land, but I have no barn, nowhere to put [the crops], and you know that there is no place [near the house] to build it. So it would be the best to sell the field, if you don't wish to be upon it [to settle here], and if I must only grieve [have trouble] alone. I can sell it myself, only send me, all you children, an authorization, and let your uncles send me also an authorization, for they belong to the same farm [they have a right to a part of it]. Then I shall sell it and come to you, and we shall live together, and you will get sooner something of it, for now the value is greater as long as the forest is entire and nothing is missing. . . . . I beg you, dear son, if you allow me to sell it, do it at once. . . . . I beg you, dear son, do it for me, and you all, my dear children, and you, my dear brothers, do it for me, for I would see you once more, as long as we are still alive. [Greetings.]

FRANCISZKA KOZŁOWSKA

Dear daughter Marysia and son-in-law: Why are there in the [wedding-] photograph neither the Bieniewskis, nor the Brzostowiczs, nor my brothers, nor my sister-in-law, only strange people? This astonishes me much. What does it mean?

228 March 4, 1907

. . . . DEAR SON: . . . . You are obstinately bent against me and I am against you. I would not write to you, but I must. I write you only: consult among yourselves [and decide] as you want to. The shoemaker's wife made an inventory [of the farm, for auction]. We stood before the court, and she quarreled with me, tooth against tooth, and moreover she cursed you for neither taking her man to

[1] This phrase is added later, the first statement seeming perhaps too improbable. Even the worst land was worth at this period twice as much, and it would be a very poor forest on which the lumber alone, without the land, would be worth no more than 200 roubles a morg.

and son-in-law, that I was angry with you. No, I was not angry at all, I was very much satisfied, only I waited for your answer. Dear children, you are so dear to me, that I kiss these photographs of you upon the wall. . . . .

FRANCISZKA KOZŁOWSKA

227 November 4, 1906

. . . . MY DEAR CHILDREN: . . . . And now I inform you that I am healthy, but scarcely, from all this thinking which I have upon my mind. . . . . I received your letter and 3 photographs; I gave one to Szczepańska and I have two left. I inform you that I am very much satisfied, dear daughter and son-in-law, may our Lord God bless you, and God's Mother. May she help you in your work and in everything. . . . . Now I write, your mother, to all of you, my children, in general. First to you, dear son, and to my daughter-in-law, and to the Bieniewskis and to the Brzostowiczs and to the Baranowskis, and I wish you every good, whatever you want for yourselves, my dear children.

Now I inform you about this land, that to these 2 morgs were added during the new division, 2 morgs of field and 1 morg of forest to each. . . . . So there are now 6 morgs of field and 2 of forest, 8 morgs together. Now I inform you, dear children, on what spots we received this addition. [Describes in detail.] You, Antoś, and you, Marysia, you know where it is and in what position.

Now, my dear children, it would be the best if we sold it, for I have nothing from it except trouble. I don't sow the land, only [strange] people do, for I rented it, for I cannot manage it myself. Even if I wanted to sow myself, you know that there is no barn and there is no place to put the crops. I keep the forest, but again people steal. A man could guard it more easily, while I, a woman, what can I do? I have only trouble. So it would be the best, my dear children, to sell it, for all this is wasted for the land they pay [the rent]; but in the forest whatever anybody snatches is his own, and when I need money, I also sell some tree,[1] and so all this is wasted. If you don't do as I advise you, dear children, after a few years it will be much cheaper [worth less]. Now they would give money, for they

[1] She has no right to do this, and she confesses it, for evidently the shoemaker's wife has written more than once to her brother and sisters that the mother is wasting the forest.

Mother—she did not even thank her.[1] Dear son, and all my dear children together, I tell you sincerely I won't write you any more letters since you are so turned to stone against me. Since you are so little curious to learn what is going on here with us I won't inform you. I bless you all with the holy cross [old habit in bidding farewell].

Dear son, you said to Franek, "If you manage well I will send you some assistance." And now you don't even send a naked letter [without a stamp]. But if this shoemaker's wife sells our land at auction then our assistance is over. Dear son, we keep two pigs for ourselves, but there can be no cow from them [probably alluding to some promise to send money for a cow], the less so if the shoemaker's wife drags us about courts, as she is now doing. Dear son, I ask you, and do you answer me. Do you agree to pay her 50 roubles, as I wish, or not? Perhaps you will send us some money for this payment? For if we sell these pigs, we can have perhaps enough to buy a cow. I beg you, dear son, for a speedy answer. I salute you all, yourself and your wife and my grandchildren.

[FRANCISZKA]

229 June 2, 1907

. . . . DEAR CHILDREN: I inform you that I am not very healthy, for even an iron man would have no longer any health. I thank you heartily for this letter, dear children, which you sent me.[2]. And then, dear children, I received also the letter from Zosia. Dear children, I beg you all together, answer me, what is this "dirt" which I have on me?[3] Answer me, who wrote that letter so that this "dirt" may not grieve me longer. Dear children, I have enough of my own trouble. Dear children, I can never in the world bear these troubles, for, dear children, in the week when I wrote this letter I went to Czerwin, and I hardly got there, for my feet were covered with blisters.

[1] The members of the family in America are evidently disaffected by reports from the shoemaker's wife and realize that Szczepańska is in the scheme with their mother.

[2] The son has been moved in some way by the preceding letter to write; probably by the mother's words: "May our Lord God and your children care for you as much as you do for me." This is the kind of mother's curse which never fails to be impressive.

[3] "Dirt" is commonly used in the sense of "immorality." She has probably been accused of immoral relations with the man who afterward marries her.

America nor paying her off. Our guardians asked her how much she wanted to be paid off. Then this old beggar, this carcass [her husband] wanted 70 roubles, and she asked 60. I will give her 50, and the guardians also tell her to take 50 and no more. But, dear son, I would rather give her nothing. What do you advise? I was everywhere [for advice], and I thought of either renting the field or selling the forest [to pay her]. But, dear son, I wish I had never lived until this new division and addition, since I am a hinderance to all of you and you are angry with me and you don't write me for half a year. Were it not for this affair I would rather have died [*zdechla*, used here vulgarly like the English "rotted," is properly used only of animals=German *krepiren*] and would not have written. Now, dear son, come rather to an understanding among yourselves, take it, sell it and make peace with this shoemaker's wife. Let her not call God's vengeance upon you and grieve me. And now after all this she intends to have an auction, for her part of the inheritance from your grandfather and your father. You left me here for sorrow only. Dear children, don't believe anybody, when the shoemaker's wife slanders me to people. Why, you get it [bad words] also from her, dear son, into your eyes, and behind your eyes [proverbial, to your face and behind your back]. And you get still more from her. She says: "Much did he care for his mother! And when he came to Warsaw, he let his nails grow a *sążeń* long [6 feet] pretending to be a gentleman."

Dear son, I thank you for writing to me so often! But don't think, dear son, that I write it from my whole heart [that I am grieved]. I say it simply because you write once in a year. If I had known that you would guard me so! May our Lord God and your children care for you as much as you do for me! If you had not gone into the world you would have known better what a mother is, while now in return for my education [of you] you are ashamed of me. But Mańka did the same. She accidentally wrote one letter, that we might know only that she got married. Dear son, please say to Mańka about this letter that she rejoiced me awfully, that I don't know what to do in the country, and she gave me precisely such advice as the letters she writes [no letters, no advice]. To the shoemaker's wife she can well send bows and write, but when her godmother sends her a gift—she sent her scapularies and a veil of God's

I have nothing more to write to you, dear children and brother. Remain with God. May God help you.

[FRANCISZKA]

I salute my sister-in-law and my brother. Sister-in-law, why should we be angry with each other and what for? I have not seen you, sister-in-law, with my very eyes, and I shall die without seeing you. Well, my dear, let us kiss each other, at least by letter, at least through this paper; let us give hands to each other. I thank you so much, sister-in-law, for not forgetting me yet, and that you both remembered me. Dear brother, I thank you for this, for your knowing that I am your sister. Remember, dear, how you cared for me and I cared for you.

[FRANCISZKA]

Dear children, I don't want to make you any trouble about taking me [sending me a ship-ticket]. I should prefer if you sent me a few roubles [in cash], but I should find my way more easily if you take me [if you send me a ticket].

230 [June 2 1907]

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTERS: Have pity and take at least our mother, let her have at least a few easier hours. Dear brother and sisters and brothers-in-law, I beg you, if you want to see your mother before she dies, take her to you. Have pity, for, dear brother and sisters, you have written already 4 letters, thanks to God, and in each of them you say that you will take us to America. So mother waits for this letter like the mercy of God. When the letter comes, mother kisses it from joy and wets it with tears, but when she opens it [she is deceived].

[FRANEK]

231 July 12 [1907]

. . . . DEAR SON ANTONI: Answer me how I shall manage, for my son-in-law Baranowski sent me a letter saying that he is sending me a ship-ticket for myself and for my son, and wishes to take us to America. And you, dear son, come to an understanding yourself with the others, whether all of you know about it or not, for I am not just as I stand, but I have land and forest, and I don't know how to manage. It is true that my son-in-law is good. But you, my son, you are my

And I went in vain, for not all of our guardians were there; 3 were and 3, not. Now I shall have to go again, and when winter comes and it is necessary to creep upon the snow, surely I shall die. And since the shoemaker's wife made the inventory, the guardians won't allow me to sell this property, for Franek is a minor.

And now, dear children, could you arrange so: Send me such a decision that I can rent [the farm] for some years. Now people are afraid to pay money down for some years, lest it be lost. I should be glad, dear children, to step away from her [the shoemaker's wife's] eyes. [*Ślepie*, in the original, is properly used only for the eyes of animals.] Let her not cause me any more grief. If I went to you perhaps God would guard me for a year or two, while thus, dear children, when these troubles fill my head I have [peace] neither day nor night. There is no work from me at all, and soon I shall go away from [lose] my reason, and I shall no longer understand any of your writing. O God my dear, God my dear, why do you keep me in this world?[1] Dear children, I beg you, take me to you, I want to have one hour of relief at least and not have to listen to this [calling of] vengeance against you, dear son, and against Zosia. Moreover, she [the daughter] persuades some dogs like herself to write dirt against me. What dirt do they write against me? Perhaps she writes against me about this [man]? I who can hardly walk with my pains, and she writes dirt about me! For this land I should have more than one purchaser, but when I learned that the guardians won't let it be sold, I have no more strength to bear all this. Oh, nothing can be done, my dear children, evidently she must kill me with trouble in this country!

Dear brother, you ask me in your letter about money. I did not see any money and probably I am to see none. When you sent me some, I saw it, but now when you don't send, I see none.

I greet you also, my dear children. It is true that I received at last a letter from you, but I will remember it until my death—what [sorrow] you gave me about that dirt.

[1] Here the grief, although also affected, seems more real than in the first letter, for besides the quarrel with the "shoemaker's wife" there is another reason, i.e., the matter of the "dirt." Whether justified or not, such a suspicion is likely to affect a peasant woman more profoundly than anything else. And the impossibility of selling the land, meaning the failure of her scheme, is a third reason for grief.

house, and Franek is with me. How good he [the husband] is to me, thanks to God! May he be always as good! For when I am sick, he at least cares well for me, and it is well now. I had decided to go to America, but when these Baranowskis managed it so badly, I changed my mind, for now I have no land, and therefore I had to marry. Inform the Baranowskis how I did, and let them send their address, then I shall send them the ship-tickets back. Don't be angry with me for having done so, for I have wasted everything through this. And in the office [in Libawa] they said that these are tickets for a working-ship [steerage?]. And you can know what this journey has cost me. From Warsaw to Libawa alone 42 roubles. . . . . [1]

[FRANCISZKA]

[Postscript]

And I inform you that we went [started] to America all three, the shoemaker went with us for money, for he borrowed it. When

[1] The story, as related in this and the following letters, is full of contradictions and totally false. In spite of her son's and son-in-law's wish, she decided not to go to America at all, but to marry Plata. She wished evidently to profit from the opportunity, and to get as much money as possible for herself, as a dowry. Thus, according to her son's wish, she rented the land and sold a part of the forest. Evidently, she had to sell also her farm-stock and household effects in order to make it appear that she really intended to go. Then she had to find a pretext for not going, to account for the money, to explain her marriage, and to conciliate her son-in-law, the shoemaker, and his wife—her worst enemies—that they might not betray her but corroborate her story.

She hoped first to be detained on the score of sore eyes (suspicion of trachoma). She went therefore to many oculists, hoping that one of them would tell her that she could not go. It is very probable that she even tried to get her eyelids inflamed, and went to a Jewish barber in Goworowo (the Jewish barbers act secretly as physicians and are ready to do anything—abortion, artificial crippling to exempt young men from military service, etc.), who, as she says in letter No. 233, "almost burned her eyes." She then went to Warsaw hoping to deceive the oculists there. When this plan failed, she invented the story of the tickets, which is wholly false. First, she says that the tickets were for a "working-ship"; now, this term is current only among the peasants to indicate ships which take only steerage passengers, and she could not have heard this term from the steamship agents. Then she says the tickets were not valid at all. But it is evident that the agent in Warsaw would not have sent her to Libawa with such tickets, for he would have been legally responsible. Certainly the tickets were valid, but for steerage; somebody must have told her that steerage traveling was bad, and she profited from this suggestion to stay. Perhaps she would not have gone even to Libawa if she had been alone,

guardian, and answer me, how I shall have it there [what conditions]. For, my dear son, there is a marriage opportunity for me, with Józef Plata, who is a very good man. So answer me, my son, as soon as possible, whether I may live in our country, for I don't need to wander about the world in my old years, only my [youngest] son wants us to go. Dear son, answer me as soon as possible, for I am awaiting this letter with my journey and with my wedding.[1] . . . . Dear son, reflect all of you only once, but well, for my son-in-law tells me to rent the land and the forest. . . . . I cannot sell it myself, a father can, but not I. I have nothing more to write, only I wish you health, happiness, and good success. . . . . Dear son, when you receive this letter, don't show it to my daughter Mania, and don't tell her anything, for my son-in-law wishes to take me secretly to America [to surprise his wife].

FRANCISZKA KOZŁOWSKA

232 September 11 [1907]

. . . . DEAR SON: . . . . You advised me to go but now I am not going. I have married that Plata who had Ewa Pieńkos as wife, from the same village I came from. What could I do in this misery? When I received the ship-tickets I did at once what you ordered me to do. I rented the land for 3 years, I sold the cow which I had and the forest which was left after father's death, while yours [inherited from the grandfather] is still there. I have wasted all the living which I had [store of grain, potatoes, etc.] and I have bought everything for the journey. And now living is expensive, and I spent some money on living, and I had to dress myself and Franek a little before going to you . . . . and I bought 2 shawls for 13 roubles and 15 pounds of feathers for 12 roubles. [Went twice to the doctor, then to Libawa, and was sent back.] This journey cost us much, for everywhere money had to be paid, and I wasted everything. I have not written to you for I fell sick from grief and I waited until our Lord God changed [restored] me. But now I am somewhat better and I describe this to you. Hermanowiczowa [the "shoemaker's wife"] moved to me, to my lodging and I live with Plata. He built a new

[1] The letter shows clearly, behind the cautious expressions, a total change of intentions. She no longer wants to go to America, but she does not dare to take a decisive step at once. Probably at the moment of writing this letter the later scheme is not yet ready in her mind.

I got married, don't persuade [reproach] this to me, for I got married only when I came back from my journey. If the ship-tickets had been good, I should be in America already, with you, for I wanted continuously [*sic*] to go to you. But since it happened so, nothing can be done, my dear son-in-law. You have made expenses for yourself, and I also, my dear children, have made expenses for myself, and I got totally ruined, for I wanted to go to you within an hour [immediately]. I had a cow; I wasted it. I had some small crops in the field; I wasted them also, for I prepared myself to go, and you don't believe me and are angry with me. As to my getting married, dear children, it was from this misery, when we had been sent back home, for I had wasted everything, so how could I live? And this year all living is expensive here, grain and potatoes are expensive, and so in putting things together it is easier for me to live.

And as to my not having answered you and sent you the tickets back, it was because I had not your address, and I was afraid to send them to these other children, for perhaps they would not have given them back to you. Now as soon as I received your letter, I sent you at once the ship-tickets, and these signs [checks] of these agents from Warsaw, to whom you wrote to care for us, I sent them to you for controlling. Dear children, how much trouble and weeping I had in that Libawa, God forbid! It is impossible to understand these Germans [*sic!*]. Were it not for an interpreter who explains everything in Polish I should not have got these ship-tickets back, for they threw them away at once and I could not find them. They wanted red ones, and these were black, and therefore they sent us back and we have all so much expense.

And now I inform you, dear children, about these 60 roubles. I have them not, for I have spent them. I inform you that from Warsaw to Libawa the railway cost us 21 roubles and 21 roubles back. Now I bought you, Marysia, 2 shawls, I gave 13 roubles, and 15 pounds of feathers, I gave 12 roubles, and all this is lying here. Now, dear children, I don't know what I shall do with all this myself, for I have my own shawl and I don't want yours. Write me, dear daughter; perhaps I can send you these shawls by somebody. As to the rest, dear children, forgive me. When I have more money, I will send you at least one half. As to my daughter and your wife, don't be angry, my son-in-law, that you did not take any fortune with her.

233 October 24, 1907

we returned he gave this money back at once, for he borrowed it from the priest and wished to go along with us.

I inform you also that when I intended to go to America I went to Goworowo to a doctor. He poured something into my eyes and almost burned my eyes. I went twice to Warsaw, and there the doctor said that I could have been blinded. You say that I did not wish to go. But I went twice to Ostrołęka to the [district-] chief for passports, and I paid once one rouble, then two. So much trouble and cost I had.

. . . . Now I inform you, my dear children, daughter and son-in-law, that I received your letter and we answer you at once and we inform you that we are in good health [wishes]. Now you write to me, son-in-law, and you are angry with me. But nothing can be done. I am not guilty at all in this matter, my dear son-in-law, for I was already on the way, in the last station, in Libawa, and from Libawa we were sent back. Now, my dear children, would I have caused such a cost for you without wishing to go to you? Why, our Lord God would punish me severely for it. And as to this, dear children, that

---

but her son-in-law, the shoemaker, was with her. Then she tries by all means to make it appear that she spent all her money on the journey to Libawa and back. It is easy to calculate how much money she really had with her. The cow, crops, household furniture, must have brought at least 150 to 200 roubles. Rental of 6 morgs for 3 years at least 180 roubles. The son-in-law Baranowski sent 60. The sale of a part of the lumber perhaps 150–200—together about 600. The journey to Libawa and back for 2 persons, 28 roubles. As she writes 42, she must have paid her son-in-law's fare in order to win his discretion. The journeys to Warsaw and back, inspection by the oculists, etc., no more than 20, probably less; buying of the shawls and feathers (which she later kept for herself), 27, passport, 3. If we take into account the living during this time and the son's clothing we have not more than 150 roubles for all the expenses. Thus she had certainly about 450 roubles left. She writes in the letter No. 232 that she was obliged to buy clothing for herself, while later her *kuma* Maryanna Szczepańska says that she was obliged to sell her best petticoat. The *kuma* is evidently "fixed"; the daughter, the "shoemaker's wife," also, for after all the preceding quarrels she comes to live in her mother's house. Thus, the scheme is carried out, and Franciszka must have brought to her husband no less than 400 roubles of dowry. As she was old, the man would never have taken her without money. And all this was so cleverly done that she does not lose her right—a part of the inheritance left by her first husband. Indeed she expects to receive the total income from the land when the period of its rental has expired, for there is mention that her husband must feed her until that time.

may not live any more upon this earth with my beloved daughter [*sic!*]. But why should you, dear son-in-law, persuade me that it is time for me to go into this holy earth? When I shall go to my tomb, you won't even know it.[1] So, my dear son-in-law, don't make me grieve any more, for you made me grieve enough in a single letter.

Dear son-in-law B., I beg you, if it is very hard for you to be there with these children, I beg you, if it is possible, send me one child, so I can educate it. I beg you, dear son-in-law, do as you think the best. And I beg you, dear son-in-law Franuś [pet name], if you could send it, write me in a letter whether you will send it or not, my dear son-in-law!

Dear son-in-law [Janek] and daughter, although you are angry with me about this money, I beg you still, care for these orphans, for you see that they have no mother now. And if it is possible, I beg you, dear daughter, send me one child. I would keep it as long as my eyes shine upon this world. I beg you for it, my dear daughter. Reflect how you should act with regard to my words. May God grant us to live until this. Amen.

[FRANCISZKA]

235 April 18, 1909

And now, dear children, we answer you "In centuries of centuries, Amen." And now we inform you that we received your letter on Good Friday, for which we thank you heartily, for not forgetting us. [Health and wishes.] I am healthy, by the grace of God, only this death of Zosia torments me and gives me no peace. How is she buried there, and why was I not there when she was dying? But, dear daughter and son-in-law, try that at least these orphans get on well, that they don't suffer hunger, for you see that they cannot have a mother any more, only you are their guardians. Care for them, and God and Mother Mary will care for you.

And I ask you, my dear children, how do you live without your sister and my dear daughter, for I think continually about her, day and night. I gave money for recording her, and if God helps me I will

[1] All this about being buried, etc., is probably nothing but a rhetorical development of her reproach for the grief her son-in-law has caused by his letter, or it may be an indirect allusion to some phrase in his letter. He may have written, for instance, that she was too old to marry.

If you want to come here, sell her part and take it, for it belongs to her. It is as if she had it in her pocket.[1] . . . .

Now I send you a greeting from myself, your mother, and from Franek, and from your father, my husband. Dear children, I did not marry a young man, only a man in the same age as I am, and he is good for me, and he does not hinder you at all, for he won't waste your fortune; he has enough of his own to live. In another letter I will write you still more about my journey, for it is too much writing at once.

Your truly loving mother,

FRANCISZKA KOZŁOWSKA

234 December 24, 1908

DEAR SON-IN-LAW: I inform you that we received your letter on December 21, for which we thank you heartily. But instead of being comforted, I was grieved, and I should even prefer if you had not answered me so soon, for I should think her still alive. Why did you send me, dear children, such a letter, at once about money and about my dear dead daughter? Probably you intend to push me alive into the tomb through such writing as you write to me! You write, son-in-law, and you trouble me about sending you at least 100 roubles back. But I thank God that I have anything to put into my pot, for I have wasted everything through your fault. I rented the land, and I live now as I can, poor orphan, upon this world of God. And now, dear children, do you think that I grieve only about your money? Oh no, my children, I grieve because my beloved daughter is dead and the orphans are left. How do they live there, my dear little grandchildren? And I grieve, because Franek will have to go to the army, and you all scattered about the world, away from me, poor orphan. And you cause me still more grief by this bit of paper, asking me to give you this money back. I know that you wasted money on me, but I wasted also everything which I owned upon this journey to you. But I don't deny what you sent me. Only, if you want to have this money, come back to our country, as other people do; you have your parts, sell them and you will have your money. But evidently you want to bury me alive into this holy earth, that I

[1]The journey would cost more than this part would be worth. He had evidently complained that he not only got no dowry with his wife, but that he has expenses on account of the mother-in-law.

went. And when I was returned, was it my fault? I wasted your money, and very little of mine was left. When I returned home, I found a desert house. What could I begin then, poor orphan? Should I have called to you, my dear children, and related to you my trouble? But my voice could not have reached you, for you are in a far country, and I was left, an orphan, among waste and troubles, and I had slowly to provide myself once more with the outfit which I had wasted. You were angry with me, dear children, as if I did so intentionally in order to take the money without coming to you. Oh my children, our Lord God is above us, He sees and hears everything. Should I lie?[1] Should I have renounced you and not [wanted] to go to you and not [wanted] to see you? Why, you know that I am left now alone, I have none of you, my dearest children, with me, I am left alone, an orphan, and I can see none of you alive, only I look continually upon these dead photographs. But you, dear daughter, surely you forgot me in truth, since you let a year pass without writing to me, and you forgot when I asked you for the photograph of that orphan after [left by] Zosia. You sent one to the shoemaker's wife and you did not even mention me. I asked the shoemaker's wife for this photograph, but she did not wish to give it to me. . . . . Well, and now, dear daughter, you remembered that you have still a mother somewhere in the world, and you write, curious how I live here and how I succeed! . . . .

And now, dear daughter and son-in-law, please don't be angry about that which I shall ask for, and send me a photograph of these orphans; let me see them once more at least.

Now I send an image and a toy for my granddaughter. . . . .

[FRANCISZKA]

237 [November 4, 1906]

I write to you both, my dear goddaughter, I, your godmother Szczep[ańska], and I wish you every good and whatever you want from our Lord God, the best. I thank you for not forgetting about

[1] This appeal to God is curious, for a peasant never makes a false oath, unless totally demoralized. But an oath with mental reservation is frequent. In this case the oath does not refer to anything in particular, unless to the following phrase, and as she probably really wanted to see her children, it is in so far true. It may be also that in repeating all her lies she has finally half-forgotten her real intentions, which she had perhaps also never very explicitly stated to herself.

give also for a holy mass for repose of her soul.[1] And I pray for her to God and to our Mother Mary, that God may take her to himself. Pray you also to God for her soul, and God will forgive her certainly.

And now, dear daughter, you mention these feathers, asking me to send them to you. You see, it is so, dear daughter. These feathers which I had bought began to be eaten by mites, so I sold a part of them, but if somebody happens to go to America, I will buy some and send them to you.[2] But if nobody goes, then nothing can be done, and don't be angry with me, dear daughter and son-in-law, for I am not guilty at all. It is true that it costs you a few roubles, but I have also lost everything which I had. So don't be angry with me, my dear children, for if I cannot reward you, I will pray to God for your health and success, and God will help you in your work. . . . .

[FRANCISZKA]

And I greet you, dear brother Wincenty. I cannot give you my hand in this [help you], for I have nothing myself, but you, children, do your best and nourish your uncle as you can. Dear brother, can you not help yourself in any way? Come to an understanding with our brother and make some plan, so that it may be well.

You see, dear brother, when you were in good condition, you did not want to know anything about your wife and children, and now you remember them!

236 February 9, 1913

. . . . I received your letter, my dear children [Baranowskis], for which I thank you heartily, for I waited for it with longing. My dear children, you say that I am angry with you. Oh no, my dear children, I am not angry with you. You say that I did not answer your letter. It is true, my dearest children, that I did not answer you, but why? You see, it is true that you wished to take me to you, and I was glad because of your wish, but I don't know whether that ticket was bad or those guides. And so you sent me money and I sold everything, or rather wasted everything [sold too cheap] and

[1] The priest has a record of those of his parishoners who have died, and between the sermon and the mass prays for their souls, calling their names. A mass costs from one to three roubles. A record is cheaper and less efficient than a mass. Franciszka may have had a mass celebrated, but prefers not to acknowledge that she was in a position to spend that amount.

[2] She used the feathers as part of her dowry.

239 October 24, 1907

DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW: I send you holy images. . . . . Dear sister and brother-in-law, you don't believe us that we wanted to go to America; but . . . . I, your brother, will draw my lot [be called to military service] in two years after next spring, so . . . . I should be glad to see all of you at once. . . . . Dear brother-in-law, I am very much grieved that you say that you will tear all the hair from your head [from despair]. Dear brother-in-law, it is not the fault of my sister. . . . .

FRANEK KOZŁOWSKI

240 [April 18, 1909]

And now I, Franciszek [Franek], thank you, dear brother-in-law and sister, for at least not forgetting me, for my brother dear [irony] does not write me a single word. He is angry with me, I don't know what for. Although we ought to love each other, for we are only two and I must go to the army instead of him, he does not care for me. Such a good brother, loving his brother! It is bitter and hard for me to remember such a brother! What is my fault toward him? O God, be merciful to us, your sinners![1]

And now, dear brother-in-law and sister, I go to Prussia, so please write me a letter there. I will send you my address. I was in Częstochowa, but I did not expect that a letter from you, dear sister, would come, or else I should have brought a greater token. Now I send you only scapularies of Mary the Virgin, already consecrated, ready to be put around the neck. . . . .

[FRANEK]

241 June 11, 1911

. . . . DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW: [Complains about military service.] May never any good man serve in the army, for here everybody must be a slave and is not free, as at home. And now I ask you, my dear sister Mania and brother-in-law, how do you succeed in that America, whether well or poorly. Write me please, dear sister, how are these orphans kept after Zosia['s death], ... for

[1] A strange phrase for a young boy; a typical phrase for an old woman. The style of the whole letter is clearly an imitation of the mother's style.

me, so I send you a gift. These are those scapularies from Częstochowa, and in this one scapulary with the cross there is sewed up a [part of the] veil of God's Mother of Częstochowa. This is important. I send you a blessing for your whole life. May God bless you, and God's Mother. And my daughter Helcia is very glad that you don't forget her. . . . .

SZCZEP[AŃSKA]

238 [December 28, 1908]

And now I, dear daughter, greet you, I, your godmother, greet you, Mania! Dear daughter, I write you about this: Why did you cause such costs for your mother that she might go to you, to America! Going to this America, your mother sold the forest and rented the land, and all the money which she had was wasted in journeying. She went twice to Ostrołęka; no little money was spent; twice to Warsaw on account of her eyes. Then at last they went to Libawa and there they remained for some time, and the rest of their money was spent on their living, for the ship-tickets were bad, and they had to return home. Your mother had sold everything, she had sold even her best petticoat for this journey, and when she came back, if Pl[ata] had not married her, I don't know how she would live, for she had not a grosz left. Now, you wrote that Zosia is no longer alive, and I am also sad, and what do you think about your own mother? And you make her grieve still more about this money. You have no idea what a sad Christmas your mother had this year, for she is grieved because of the death of her beloved daughter. And this field which your mother rented is still sown by strange people, until the years are ended [the renting-term], and your mother, as you know, is fed by Pl[ata] until [the end of] this time. And now, dear daughter Mania, don't be offended at my writing it to you, but your mother is almost senseless, and she continually cries and complains, what a bad fortune befell her upon this world.

I, who love you, my daughter, MARYANNA SZCZEPAŃSKA

Dear [god]daughter, I have learned to know your mother now. If she could take her heart out, she would give it to you, but she cannot take it out and what will she do with her misery? And now I bid you all goodbye. May God grant it. Amen.[1]

[1] The letter is evidently written under the influence of Kozłowska, and is perhaps instigated by her.

243 [April 18, 1909]

And now I, your father, salute you, together with your mother and my son, and we wish you every good, whatever you want for yourself from God. We greet [bless] also those little orphans. May God keep them in His holiest guardianship. And [if] perhaps anything in this letter displeases you, then please forgive, for your mother was terribly grieved. . . . .

[Józef Plata]

244 March 27, 1912

. . . . Dear Brother-in-law and dear Sister: It is very painful for me that I cannot see my family, and don't even receive a bit of paper that I might at least by letter speak with you. But God reward you even for this bit of paper which you send to mother, even this rejoices me. I should like to see my family there in America, but as I have no money I can do nothing, and there is nobody to help me. If you put together $10 each you could take me to you. I don't want the wrong of anybody, and would give it back with thanks, if only God grants me health. For when you sent the ship-ticket for mother and for Franek, I told mother as a joke: "Take me with you to America, it will be more pleasant to go together." I had then much running to do and many expenses to bear, for I had to go 3 times to Ostrołęka to take an application for a passport, and twice to Warsaw. At last we three went and I had a ship-ticket, bought from the agent in Warsaw for money, and we went to Libawa. In the office in Libawa they refused to accept these tickets which you sent, and besides my ticket they wanted 21 roubles for a passport. I begged mother to lend me this money since I had had already so many expenses. But she refused to help me; she said, "I cannot." Then I said, "Send Franek instead of me, he will take these tickets with him and will settle the matter by words, and they [in America] won't lose so much." But mother answered, "I am not going and neither of you is going either," and I had to come back. As to this, what mother said, that "The shoemaker drags me about courts," I did not intend lawsuits as other people do, but I had to have a guardianship established, i.e., a family council. For mother received 2 morgs of forest, and wasted it half in vain. What was worth 5 roubles, she sold for 2, while now she must almost buy fuel herself. When I went once to the forest

I am very curious [interested]. And answer me, whether our brother-in-law B. married [a second time] or not. [Describes military life.]

And now, dear Mania and brother-in-law, I beg you write a letter to our sorrowful dear mother, and don't be angry with mother, for she is without guilt toward you, and sinful before God alone.[1] Dear Mania and brother-in-law, you are probably angry since the time when you wanted to take her to America. But old mother then wanted to go to you as to God (without comparing it),[2] and she rejoiced that in her old years she was to see her children. But what could she do when she was unable to go to you? And now, dear sister Mania and brother-in-law, you are angry with your sorrowful and grieved mother, while perhaps you won't see her any more unless in the next world. And with this anger you will go into the next world, and so we shall look upon one another—and what will God say to this? How shall we justify ourselves? Dear sister and brother-in-law, mother writes to me always and says that she has no letter from you, and she always weeps in her letter, so it is not pleasant for me either, for she is my mother and yours. . . . . If you saw our mother, you would never recognize her, how she is now without children, for always something new happens [some new trouble].

FRANEK KOZŁOWSKI

242 [July 12, 1907]

I, Józef Pl[ata], wish to take your dear mother for my wife. Answer as soon as possible whether you will take her or whether you tell her to marry me. I would give my life for her. I have nothing more to write, only I send a low bow to you all, to the whole family.[3]

Your well-wishing

JÓZEF PL[ATA]

[1] Not to be taken as an admission of any particular sin, but only as the application of the general principle of Christian humility that all men are sinners before God.

[2] The restriction is made because a real comparison would be a sin; the restriction characterizes it as a simple metaphor.

[3] The man simply asks for permission to marry their mother. This indicates once more the degree to which the family is felt as a reality, and the marriage of any member—father or mother, brother or sister, son or daughter—as affecting immediately this reality, is a familial as well as an individual matter.

mother. Then I had all my documents, and I begged mother to help me a little, but she did not want to. I said, "Then send Franek instead of me." But mother said, "I don't go and you shall not go either." And so mothers act toward their own children! Because she ruined herself, she wanted to ruin her children. But she returned to her own house, while I returned like the farmer whose buildings are all burned and who is left without a roof above his head. The few roubles which I had, I lost them for mother's sake, and later I was obliged to earn and economize again. And excuse me for writing this, for I tell the truth. As I believe you, so do you believe me, please. And now mother is angry for your not having sent money for Franek when he was going to the army. . . . . Antoś [her son] sent her 10 roubles, and now Antoni [her brother] sent also 10 roubles, but all this is not enough for them. . . . .

ANTONI HERM—

and said, "Why do you waste this timber?" they abused me, she and her son, and denied that there was anything to which I had any right. So I was obliged to have a guardianship established, because Franek was a minor and mother took rather too much liberty. And excuse me, don't be angry with me, dear sister and brother-in-law, for I tell the truth always into one's eyes, not behind one's eyes. For so many years since you have been in America I have never had even a small sheet from you, except now this address, for which may God reward you. I should not go to America, except for my children. My daughter Mania can marry. She is 20 years old. My son Władzio is 16 years old, Zygmunt 6 years, Genia 4 years, and I am very sad that I cannot help them, for in our country there is no work and the expenses are big. What I earn is only enough for living, and when we have to pay the rent we must go hungry. If you could draw me to you I don't know how I could reward you. [I should be so grateful.]

ANTONI HERM[ANOWICZ]

245 May 29, 1912

. . . . DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW: . . . . As to the ship-ticket which I mentioned, I did not count on you alone, brother-in-law. For there are three of you. I don't count B., for he is like a strange man.[1] I am not acquainted with you, so I did not look [to you alone]. I beg your pardon politely for importuning you. For I believe everything you wrote about Antoni, as if I were there myself. You tell me to borrow 140 roubles, but it is not so easy, for here people lend only to a man who has something to look upon [some property]. Meanwhile, I live only from these five fingers; I have nothing but what I earn. Even so our beloved [="loving," ironical] mother, whenever she sees anything new of clothes upon us, wonders whence we get money for it. Instead of being glad that we manage to dress ourselves as we can, she is angry with us.[2] How can I expect strange people to help us, when our own mother begrudges us a piece of bread? If I had wanted absolutely to be in America, I should have gone about 6 years ago when I went to Libawa with Franek and with

[1] The gradual incorporation of the brother-in-law in the family is interrupted by the death of his wife, and he becomes a "stranger."

[2] Probably not envy, but an expression of Kozłowska's general disposition to keep others down.

THE FAMILY JACKOWSKI

Jackowski, a farmer
Franciszka, his wife
Jan
Stanisław } his sons
Franek
Marysia, his daughter
Jasiek, a cousin
"The aunt," his mother

Two more aunts and two cousins.

246–67, TO JAN JACKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND

246 TRAWNIK, August 11, 1909

DEAR BROTHER: A long time has passed since we saw each other and a (relatively) longer time since we wrote. But whose fault is it? Surely not mine. . . . .

On Christmas I came home [from the army] for a ten days' leave, and precisely then we received your letter. Evidently if they had known what was written there, they would certainly not have read that letter. Seeing what was going on, I went into the field, for tears stood in my eyes. Dear brother, what I did, I know it well enough myself, and what you do and will do, you must know it the best yourself, and it concerns nobody else at all. Now, dear brother, you sent a little money home. Don't think that I shall take it. They won't ever give it to me. The second year of my service approaches its end, and during this time they sent me once last year 3 crowns, for which I did not ask. Now, when I went from the Servian frontier, we drank merrily, because we returned in good health from those troubles during the winter in Bosnia. Somebody probably made a mistake and reached in my pocket instead of his own, or I simply lost [my money] somewhere. Then I asked for 4 crowns and they sent me them [from home]. I think it was not much during 2 years.

Now, dear brother, if you have time and wish, please write me a few words and inform me why you don't write home. Perhaps you are angry because I shall return home after my military service [and take over the farm]? Well, don't think it, for I won't be at

JACKOWSKI SERIES

These are letters from a plain Galician peasant family. The oldest son, Jan, went, probably very early, to Germany and from there came to America and settled in Chicago. The second son, Stanisław, was with him, and then alone, in Germany, but returned to Austria for his military service. The third son, Franek, is young and stays at home.

The quarrels alluded to in the beginning of the correspondence have their source in economic matters. The conditions must be very bad in Wietrzychowice upon a small piece of land. Jan, who does not seem to be of a generous disposition, is irritated by the demands for money, especially as he suspects that Stanisław has drawn as much money as possible from the parents during his military service, and that he has tried to win the favor of the parents and assure for himself the better share of the inheritance after his return from the army. In addition, Stanisław has evidently been a rather light-headed boy, without much force or practicality, and Jan converts some of his general irritation into personal criticism of his younger brother.

On the other hand, the efforts of Stanisław to introduce harmony into the family are interesting. It frequently happens, as in this case, that when the family begins to dissolve one member holds it together more or less. In the Osiński series the mother does it successfully. In the Terlecki series (below) the mother tries to do it, but without success.

let you go until your time came. Just so it was with me, dear brother. I was taken not even at the frontier, but in Bremerhafen. From there they brought me to Eger and thence to Tarnów. What could I do? I only looked to see that none of my acquaintances saw me, for he would have thought I had killed or robbed someone.

Now, dear brother, you write me that you have experienced many lies from me. I am curious how you did it, since we have not written to each other. You remind me of Plagwitz, where I worked when 14 years old. But now I am a grown-up man and I have different privileges [*sic?* Probably different character and habits]. What I said and did at 14, I surely would not do now, at 22.

Dear brother, you write about Jasiek and you say that you cannot believe that I had no opportunity to write to him. If I had had his address, surely I would have written. I was at home, and our aunt asked me to write a letter to Jasiek, but a moment after she went to Sowa and wrote from there. What can I do if they quarrel between themselves? Surely it is not my fault.

Dear brother, you write me that in my life you see a whole series of lies. This only interests me—whence do they come, whether from me or from somebody else? I did not write to anybody except 3 letters to Jasiek. So you must write me whence these lies come.

Dear brother, you write me that I give you admonitions. These are not admonitions at all [when I say] that you left nothing [no money of your own at home?], for I left still less. You could care only if I took anything from home, but I wrote you clearly that I take no money from home.[1]

Dear brother, you write me that the world is wider before you. I believe you, but not strongly. Though I am a slave and servant

[1] From the whole letter it is evident that Jan, having an unreasoned grudge against Stanisław, probably connected with the fact that the latter is nearer home and more able to control their parents, tries to find some rational cause of his own feelings, and thus invents various pretexts to explain his animosity. The case is perfectly typical for a peasant. The powerful background of traditional attitudes gives rise to a behavior whose nature and reason are a puzzle to the subject himself. The latter, when asked for explanation, gives imaginary conscious reasons, more or less inadequate, depending upon the degree of his intelligence. And a curious evolution also occurs; the imaginary reason, through the power of expression, becomes more or less a real reason for the future—a part of the subconscious feeling flows through this new channel. This factor enters into the evolution of the peasant's attitude toward the manor-owner, the Jew, the government, and into many religious and familial attitudes.

home, I shall willingly yield to everybody. The world is wide and high, one can quietly wander through it. Or perhaps something else happened between you and the home? . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

247 September 18, 1909

DEAR BROTHER: I received your letter and also a dollar in it, for which I thank you heartily. Now, dear brother, I asked you why you do not write home, and you answer me that it is not my affair. I confess that it concerns me very little, and I must write also that the other matter was my affair, not yours. I should not have gone so soon to the army or home, but I had to, for they caught me. Were it not for this, perhaps we should be now together. And if you are taken to the army, you cannot hope that you will be set free for a day or half a day. With me it was the same; they took me and held me until Christmas. And if my parents came to me at once in the same week, I cannot help it, and it was not my fault.

Now, secondly, when they were with me, I did not boast to them that I had much money and that I knew 4 languages. They asked me, whether I had money, and I said that I was not without a cent. It seems to me that it was not a lie. Later, when they were leaving me, they told me not to do any silly thing, at least in the army [probably meaning that he did silly things before], and to keep well. I said that nothing bad could happen to me in the army, and I said that I knew German, so it would be always easier for me than for a boy who does not know it and comes immediately from his village. In these things which I told them there was no lie even for a heller. But as to what they wrote you, I am not the Holy Spirit that I can know everything, whether they wrote the truth or added something more. If you wrote in anger, dear brother, that I gave my money to somebody to keep, it was not so much anger as scorn [you said it ironically].

Dear brother, you remind me also of this fault, that though I had not seen my parents for 8 years, I should not have allowed them to come and visit me before I went to them.[1] But you are mistaken, for if you were in America for 10 years and appointed the day on which you would visit them, and if you came to the frontier and they [the Austrians] caught you, you could offer them thousands, they wouldn't

[1] It is not easy to understand the basis of Jan's reproach, but (cf. the following note).

me a card which came on the day of the funeral. I had then no reason to go, since the funeral was over. Now, when our father died I received a letter from home 4 days after the funeral. He died on Saturday, and on Thursday I received the news, and I wrote you at once.

Dear brother, I did not write up to the present for I thought . . . . that I should be transferred to Tarnów and thence I should go on a leave. . . . . I wrote home asking mother to send a petition to the regiment that they might transfer me to Tarnów. But mother went to ask the post official and teacher for advice, and they told her that it was impossible, for everybody would like to serve in Tarnów. She answered me that it was not worth writing. Only when I sent her a second letter, she went and sent the petition, and probably about January 1, I shall be transferred, and if she had written at once, I should be at home for Christmas. Now, dear brother, you write that it would be good for me to get free for a month from my service, to sit in warmth behind the stove and to care for my comfort.[1] Dear brother, if you think what the service is here in Bosnia! For two years to go nowhere, only to sit within the walls of the barracks and to think about your future lot, this would worry anybody. . . . .

Now, dear brother! You had feeling and love for our father, everybody can say it boldly, and I thank you with my heart and soul [for your expression of it?]. But this is bad, that mother does not do anything with her own head, but always listens to other people, and is worse off.

Now, as to the funeral, I don't know myself how it was, but when I go home, I will describe to you everything. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

250 February 9, 1910

DEAR BROTHER: [Generalities about health and success; was not transferred to Tarnów.] Now, dear brother, I inform you that my military service is slowly approaching its end. Now my thoughts are hesitating what to do after the military service. I wish to ask to be accepted as a constable. What do you say to it? At home we have not enough to live without trouble and quietly, and if I wanted to remain in the country I should have necessarily to get married, and then to work for the wife and children. Moreover, if God sends

[1] Probably not irony on the part of Jan, but a momentary softening after the death of the father.

of the emperor, yet you are also a slave, a servant of somebody else. Perhaps the same happiness awaits you also—which I don't wish you—that you will be in the same situation as I am, and I in the same as you are. So we cannot speak much about it.

Now, dear brother, I inform you that I am a corporal. I succeed well enough, I can say nothing against it, for in the army it cannot be better. In a few months this slavery will come to an end. Next month I will send you my photograph and I beg you to send me yours, since we have not seen each other for so long a time. Dear brother, let us forget what was before, and perhaps our luck will serve us better in the future. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

248 October 22, 1909

DEAR BROTHER: I received your photograph, for which I thank you heartily and which rejoiced me very much. Now, dear brother, I ask about your dear health and success. For myself, thanks to our Lord God, I am healthy and my success is good enough; a better one cannot be found in the army. Now, on October 18, I became a *Zugsführer* [sergeant] and I am with the recruits. Dear brother, you have sent me your photograph and probably you await mine, so it will come soon after this letter. You must pardon me, but I don't feel at every moment equally strong in my pocket. . . . . Now, dear brother, here in Bosnia there is no news to write. If I were in our country, I should have more to write you, for there I should sooner meet somebody and talk, while here are only strangers. . . . . Now I ask you, dear brother, what is the news in America, who gets married or will marry.

I greet you kindly and heartily, until I see you again. May God grant it. Amen.

Your loving brother,

STANISŁAW J.

249 December 24, 1909

DEAR BROTHER: In my first words I inform you that I received your letter and a dollar in it, for which I thank you heartily.

Dear brother, you write that they did not inform you by telegram about our father's death. I am quite stupid [I don't understand] myself. When our sister died, I was then in Tarnów, and they wrote

252 July 29, 1910

DEAR BROTHER: . . . . I inform you that my clothes are ready and my shoes also; I wait only for the maneuvers, which will be from August 14 until September 10. We don't know yet when we shall go home. . . . .

As to you, dear brother, mother complains that you wrote her not to write to you any more. Secondly, somebody informed them that you will marry a girl who has [only her] ten fingers, and that everybody laughs at you. As to me, I don't believe it, perhaps somebody said or wrote it in joke, and they believe it.

Now, dear brother, they have very good crops, only they cannot manage alone, and there is lack of people in the village [because of emigration]. When I go there now, I must look well at everything, and go further. Dear brother, in ending these few words I greet you kindly and heartily, and don't be angry with me about what I write, for it does not come from me, but from home. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

253 September 1, 1910

DEAR BROTHER: I thank you heartily for your letter and the dollar. . . . . On October 10 I am going home. . . . . The maneuvers were rather short, but helped us enough [tired us]. Now we rest after all this.

I wrote home what they merited. I hope that they won't write such slandering any more [about you]. I don't marvel they did, for you know how people are in the country, particularly in our village. If somebody succeeds well, the others' eyes are aching, and if they cannot annoy him in any other way they talk at least. As to myself, I owe [have wronged] no one either, but their eyes ache because I am a sergeant, so they say in the village that when I came to Tarnów my uniform was full of holes and patches, and that the better guests were ashamed to go with me to the town. But I laugh at them all. Let them talk further. If God grants it, everything will go well. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

some illness or some misfortune, it would finally be necessary perhaps to take a bag and a stick and to go begging about villages.[1] Dear brother, I don't know your ideas, for you can remain in America as long as you like it, and when you come back, the military service won't let you escape, but I have served 3 years, and [formerly] I have wandered enough about that Germany, and I have experienced enough of good and evil. But I don't know how it is in America. If I am not accepted as a constable, nothing will be left for me except to go to you. Dear brother, if you receive this letter, please describe to me your condition. What is the news with Jasiek? I sent him a photograph, but I had no answer. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

[Letter of April 1, 1910, asks for a little money to buy clothes when he leaves the army. States that he has not received more than 10 gulden from home during more than 30 months.]

251 June 9, 1910

DEAR BROTHER: In my first words I thank you heartily for your letter and for $10.00 which I received from you. . . . . My success is good enough, only I am bored; these days go so slowly in the last year. . . . .

Dear brother, I received also letters from home but they don't rejoice me at all, for mother is sick. She wrote me a letter that during the whole month of May she was in bed. Something crept into her arm and she cannot move it. She asked me to write her, when I received your letter, what is going on with you, for she has had no letter from you at all. Dear brother, I don't understand all this. If God allows me to end my service happily and if I go home, I will describe everything in detail. Now I don't even know who is my guardian, although we don't need him now any more. I cannot remain at home after my military service, for what should I have of it? If I wished to remain at home I should have to marry, and it looks silly to keep a wife upon a morg of land and to work like a horse in a threshing-machine. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

[1] A rather unexpected standpoint from a peasant. Cf. the attitude of Aleksander (Osiński series), who dreams of nothing but coming back, settling upon the farm and marrying. Perhaps the reason in the case of Stanisław is to be found in his wandering for eight years in Germany.

Now, dear brother, I inform you that Nog. from Siedliszowice came here to us and wanted mother to make a marriage-festival, saying that you had married her sister there in America. It is her luck that I was not at home; I would have given her a festival which she would have remembered for a long time. Here in Wietrzychowice they fight among themselves like dogs and cats.

Dear brother, when you receive this letter, please describe everything that is news there with you. Mother is old already. She cannot work as she did before, for she has not strength enough. I think it would be the best for her to sell [or rent?] the field at auction, and to leave the house and a bit of garden. She could keep a pig and go about the house [keep order], and we could help her a little. When I came home, I pitied her so much that I wept like a child when she told me all this.

Dear brother, I have sent a petition to the constable's department. If I learn that they will accept me, I will remain here, but if not, I will go to you. I will write you later about it.

Now, dear brother, there is work enough. . . . . Times are hard, mother has paid 24 renskis of taxes, and the cattle are sick. Nothing can be sold. Whoever has anything cannot sell it. . . . .

Now, dear brother, finishing these few words, I beg you to write your thoughts, for mother cannot do otherwise. She has worked enough, let her have at least in her old years a few days of rest. I have talked already with mother and she agrees. She wants to keep it for a year still, for she has everything sown. Dear brother, we must try that everything may be well. It won't cost us much, and at least mother will have rest and comfort in her old years. Although we have lost our father, yet our mother lives and we can be proud that she is so good that another could be found with difficulty in the village. She does not ask a cent from anybody and she won't waste her own money on trifles, as others do, for she wants to leave a remembrance [inheritance] to her children after her death.

[Stanisław J.]

255 Lwów, March 5, 1911

Dear Brother: [Health and success.] As you know already, I am in Lwów [Lemberg] in a constable school for 5 months, i.e., up to the 1st of August. If I hold out I shall go to a post in August, and if not I must seek for some other bread. . . . . If our Lord God

254 WIETRZYCHOWICE, October 21, 1910

DEAR SON AND BROTHER: In my first words: "Praised be Jesus Christus" [etc.].

Dear brother, I inform you that I came home on the 20th in the evening and I am very glad that this military service is ended at last. As to our home, dear brother, I found everything in health and in very good order. Mother is healthy, Franek also, and Marysia keeps well enough.

Dear son and brother, we inform you that up to the present everything is in the same state as it was when our deceased father left it. Here everybody is against us, everybody is envious, one does not yield to another even for a *grajcar* [kreuzer]. Father had been sick for 2 years; an abcess grew on his stomach. He was more than once consulting the doctors, and nobody could help him, only everybody advised him to go to Cracow to a hospital. But father would not agree to it, saying that he preferred to finish his life at home, with his own people, not among strangers and in another city. In the last time he could eat nothing, for it [the illness] did not allow him. At the most he took a glass of wine or of milk every hour, and it threw out of him even this.[1] For some months mother could not leave him for a moment, but sat with him day and night. And when father was giving his spirit to God, he explained to mother all his arrangements, how mother ought to do in order that everything might remain as he left it. Only, dear son, all the relatives and friends forgot about your father, and in the last moment instead of going to the funeral some of them went with oxen to the fair. For example, your aunt from the other house sent Franek [her son] to the fair with a Jew, and when your aunt from Szymonowice mentioned it to her she abused her and said that she [the aunt from S.] had come to the funeral only to eat and to drink. So you can imagine how all this went on. Dear brother, when they related all this to me, tears stood in my eyes. And not only at home, but also in the village I have been told the same.[2]

[1] Speaking of sickness as of some impersonal "it" is a vestige of the old magical system in which "it" meant "the evil," the noxious principle.

[2] The greatest disrespect which can be shown a family is lack of eagerness in assisting at the funeral of one of its members. It shows that the social standing of the family must be very low indeed. In this case there were no grown-up sons at home. The son in America sent no money; the one in the army had been away from home a long time and, as a soldier, did not count; the father had been sick for two years. These factors had lowered the standing of the family.

to your own ideas. Up to the present nobody has any right to dispose of others; everybody is his own lord. Now I am a free citizen of the Austrian state; I can do what I like. I can take at any moment what I received after the death of my father, and do with it what pleases me, for in the will it is clearly said that when we become 24 years of age mother has to give each what belongs to him, and each can do according to his will.

I was, it is true, for a few weeks at home and I know very well how everything is going on. Nothing can be said against what is at home. Everything is in the greatest order. But as there is nobody to work at home, I told mother to rent [?] the field, so that only a garden would remain with her; then she would not have to work so hard in her old years. She first asked you for advice, whether you would agree. You answered that you agreed, but as everything was sown she wants to harvest the crops this year and to rent not until the autumn. I don't know yet how she will do. I could take my part now, but what do I care for it? As long as mother lives let it remain with her, let her do with it what pleases her. Meanwhile I can do without it, and later in a year, when I become a real constable and keep [the place], I shall have a nice living. The school is rather hard and there is little time, but nothing can be done, as man can and must get accustomed to everything. And so, dear brother, don't be angry, for we are only three and we don't know what yet awaits us in this life. I say only this, that only concord will bring good results and fruits among us.

[Stanisław]

257 June 29, 1911

Dear Brother: I am astonished at your silence. Why have I had no answer from you for so long a time? I cannot imagine it. Four months have passed since I left my home, and as soon as I came to Lwów I wrote you first a card, then a letter, and I received no answer at all. But I hope that this silence between us will not remain. What is my guilt toward you? Have I done you any wrong? Certainly not I. When I wrote you the letter from home, I did not write from myself, but I wrote what mother asked me to. And you know certainly mother as well [as I do], so you should not be angry, but do as you please, for today it is permitted to everybody.

allows, it will go perhaps well, for here discipline is in the first place. As to the school, I don't need to speak. Whether there is holiday or Sunday, you must always look into the books, and even at night.

[Misery at home and in the country; taxes heavy; Franek not diligent or steady.] Now, dear brother, I will mention further the letter which mother wrote to you asking for a few hellers. You got a little angry, but what can be done? When we are in need we look for any means by which we can get something. It was the same here. I did not realize it myself before I left home, but when I came home and mother showed me the accounts, what she spent after father's death, I was astonished; I should never have believed it. But never mind. At last it happened that there was not a heller at home. Only then this letter was written. But since you did not want to send anything, nobody can tear the money away from you. For this money which you sent for *medicine* for father lies in the bank. The last decision of father was, not to touch it. For if they wrote you before to send them some and you did not do it, it was over. It came too late and father thanked for it [refused it]. Now you wrote also that you had worked enough for us, that you must think about yourself. It is all right, but there has not been so very much of it. You earned some money in Prussia, our parents added some of their own and bought a piece of land for it, which you have still. You ought not to make reproaches to mother, for it is not proper. Mother wept more than once and said if you had a little remembrance, at least about our father, you would send at least once in a year [money] for a mass for father. Don't think that I want to teach you. I don't do it ever. But I can write what I hear, for I don't know what is the opinion of anybody [how others look at the question, i.e., I let everyone have his own opinion].

[STANISŁAW]

256 May 5, 1911

DEAR BROTHER: . . . . I am curious why do you not answer me. I wrote first a card, then a letter, and I received no answer; I don't know the cause. Certainly my last letter offended you, for there was nothing else between us. I won't hide [retract] what I wrote you. I wrote what mother told me. If you got angry, it is not my fault. There was surely nothing so disagreeable as to bring anger between us. You are a grown-up man and you can manage according

home, although I wrote a letter and a card. Surely they are angry. With them anger is not very difficult. I expect a letter now or later, then I will inform you in another letter what they write about your marriage. As to Stolarz, we don't write, for we are angry with each other ever since my military service. Perhaps he is right and perhaps I am. I won't judge him; let somebody else judge.

You ask in your letter, dear brother, about my position, and in what a condition I am here. [Describes his condition, and politics.]

STANISŁAW J.

260 May 5, of the year of God 1910

First of all we write to you and we speak to you these words: "Praised be Jesus Christus." We hope that you will answer us: "In centuries of centuries. Amen." . . . .

[Health; who was called to the army.] Now, dear son, don't hope for any money from us, for, as you know, your father has been sick for a long time and whatever money there was, it is spent, some on doctors, and then when he died the funeral cost us 50 renskis [100 crowns]. And now, after father's death we made the division [of the inheritance]. We were 5 times in Żabno with the assessors and the guardians, and then we spent also money enough, for we had to give them to eat and to drink. We wrote to Jasiek that he might send us his part [of the expenses], but he answered us so, that it would be easier for him to resign his part of inheritance than to pay his part of the expenses. So I, your poor mother, must pay for everything. I got sick and was sick. And now we do what we can do alone, and we shall learn what we cannot do yet. We expected you to come at least for harvest-time. He [Stanisław] cannot come, for we received a letter from Bosnia that he must serve there up to the end. . . . .

FRANCISZKA J.

261 May 5, 1912

DEAR SON: . . . . [Letter received; health.] There is no news in Wietrzychowice. When there is any, we shall write you. Now a church will be built in W. Now you write us to give the money rather to the poor [beggars] than for a mass. But if you give to the

As to myself, I cannot say anything now. On the one hand, when I consider everything, it seems painful and I regret a little having become a constable, but on the other hand, if I reflect, everything ceases and some spark of hope rejoices me. If I remain, I shall have a piece of bread, but earned with difficulty, not on account of heavy labor, but because every inconsiderate step leads the constable to the garrison [military prison], and at last he may be dismissed and go whence he came. In another regard, he is always exposed to danger of life and health. And in the third place, anybody who wants to serve as constable to the end must be deaf, dumb, and blind. Only such a man is a good constable. There are orders enough, and every order must be well executed, and everybody wants to say [to order] something, so nothing remains except to keep your mouth shut and to work. [Describes the school.]

Now, dear brother, if you receive this letter, I beg you be so kind and if you can, send me a few kronen, for after the end of this month I need them very much. I don't know where to turn to get some money, and it is not suitable to go to my post without a kreuzer. I hope, dear brother, that you won't refuse me, and I will also try to requite you later on. You have nothing to fear, for I won't deny any heller which I received from you. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

258 NADWORNA, October 5 [1911]

DEAR BROTHER: . . . . Why do you not answer me? Don't mind if I wrote to you for money. It was in your hands, you could [have sent it] but you didn't have to. It is your business. I wrote, because I needed it. I did not receive it, so I must get on without it. Don't mind it at all, for if you had sent it I should have paid it back sooner or later. . . . . Don't wonder that I wrote asking for money, for I had just left the school. . . . . So don't be angry, dear brother, only answer me as soon as you receive this letter, and if you have a photograph, send it, for I have left the other at home. Mother asked me to leave it and I could not refuse. . . . .

STANISŁAW J.

259 BEDNARÓW, July 20, 1913

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW: I send you hearty thanks for your letter and photograph. . . . . I have had no news from

263 October 8, 1912

. . . . DEAR SON AND BROTHER: [Letter received; health and success.] Now in the village there is no news, for nobody got married. Now we have had rains for 2 months and nothing can be done. Now, dear son, you write about marrying. Well, you can marry, only you must know whom you marry. And now consider that she may be an honest girl, who would respect you and would not throw money away for [just] anything. Now consider that she may have there something [some money], or at least that she may be of an orderly [good] family. Now from Wietrzychowice there is no orderly girl [in America]. Now take care of yourself, for afterward it will be too late. You know that you get married neither for a year nor for two, but for your whole life. Now, when you marry, may our Lord Jesus also bless you for the wedding. And now I, your mother, bless you and wish you good luck in everything. Now there is nothing new or interesting; if there is anything, we will write you. Now we greet you . . . . and we bless you once more in order that you may marry the best possible.

[FRANCISZKA]

264 May 5, 1913

DEAR SON AND BROTHER: We received your letter from which we learned about your health and success and marriage. Now we are very much satisfied that you are married. Now, as to the wedding-photograph, my dear son, you ought to send it without asking, for you can know that whoever marries sends a photograph home after his wedding, and a few crowns for his parents in order that they may rejoice [feast] that he got married. So now, dear son and brother, since you ask, we beg you for it, in order that we may see [your wife] at least upon the paper, since we did not see her with our eyes.

Now, dear brother and sister-in-law, I wish you health in your marriage and good success, that you may live the best possible. [Village-news and greetings.]

[FRANCISZKA and FRANEK]

265 July 19, 1913

DEAR SON AND BROTHER: . . . . We received your letter, for which we thank you, and $5.00. Now you write that you sent two

poor [beggar] a few cents or bread, he goes to the Jew and gets so drunk that he lies under a hedge. So it is better to give for a mass than to the poor. . . . .[1]

FRANCISZKA J.

262 July 4, 1912

DEAR SON AND BROTHER: We received your letter and $5.00 for which we thank you. Now, dear brother, you ask about the crops. [Hail ruined the crops.]

Now for these dollars we thank you heartily, for we need them like eyes in the head. Now black pox reigns in our country; it is still worse than cholera. The doctors come and inoculate everybody trying to save them from it. And if anybody dies it is forbidden [to take him] to the church, only directly to the cemetery, and they don't allow him dressed, except in a shroud.

Now, dear son and brother, there is no other news in the village except these two misfortunes. Now there will be calmness for there will be nothing to harvest and nothing to thresh, and at last there will be nothing to eat, except what one buys, if he has money.[2] Now we greet you innumerable times, hoping to see you again. Amen.

[FRANCISZKA J.]

[1] The son in America has evidently developed the idea that giving money for religious purposes is wasting it and that it would be better to honor his father's memory by using the corresponding sum on philanthropy. But the peasant knows no philanthropic ends except helping the beggar. Assistance given to a neighbor or to a family member does not come under the head of philanthropy, but of mutual help. But even the helping of beggars is not a purely philanthropic, but a half-religious act, not only because it is ordered by religion, but because the beggar is bound to say prayers for the giver. In fact, the beggar has somewhat a religious function. (Cf. Wróblewski series, No. 31, note.) If therefore Franciszka explains that it is not well to give money to beggars, the background of her attitude is not merely the feeling that the money is wasted unproductively, but also that the beggars are unworthy of their religious function, and that their prayers, profaned by their going to a Jew, getting drunk, and lying under a hedge, would be less efficient religiously than a mass. For her it is a matter of comparison of homogeneous things, not of heterogeneous, as for her son. This peculiarity of the peasant life—the lack of a purely philanthropic attitude—explains to a great extent the mistrust which the peasant shows toward all philanthropic institutions, organized by the higher classes, unless these are based upon religion. The latter exception shows that the origin of the mistrust does not lie in the general hostility toward the higher classes. Cf. No. 31, note.

[2] The curious feature in this letter is what the Germans call *Galgenhumor*. It is often found in the peasant songs and stories.

taxes . . . . and so many different expenses that it is impossible to pay, while the crops are bad, and if rain comes [during the harvest], everything sprouts, so that it is impossible to eat the bread. Now, as you know, two years ago hail beat everything and only the naked soil remained. Last year everything sprouted, and now God alone knows what will be with the crops. So if you have money, it would be perhaps better for you to buy a house in Chicago than a farm. Now don't be angry with me for giving you advice, but I, as your mother, want you to live the best possible. Now, you see, there are many people from our country, but they all settle in Chicago. . . . .

[FRANCISZKA]

photographs, and we received only one, where you are, and Józek, and yours [wife], and the older best-maid, but there is no other. . . . . Now for these dollars, my son, I arranged a marriage-festival. I invited my friends and Marysia's mother and so we amused ourselves. Now, dear son, Koźlok came and said that the guests had a very small feast, and we can even know ourselves, for you sent us a photograph with two pairs, while we have seen weddings where at least 5 or 6 pairs were [photographed]. You have been for 5 years in America and yours [wife] 6, and still you did not make yourselves a decent wedding. Now we learned that you are a Sokół. Well, my son, we would advise you to leave it, for you won't be well off. For nobody has yet been well off for being a Sokół, and you won't either. [Greetings.]

[FRANCISZKA and] F[RANEK] J.

266 September 30, 1913

DEAR SON AND BROTHER: . . . . You ask what was in this [lost] letter. Well, there was this. Don't dare, my son, to sell your field here without my knowing it and don't let yourself be cheated, as Stokłosiak cheated Kazimierz M., who sold him his lot of land half-gratis. So I admonish you, my son, that you may know what to do. If you intend to sell, write home, and I will describe, what and how you should do with all this. [Crops; weather; farm-work.]

Now, dear brother, write us how do you wish and what do you think whether you will return or will stay there. Now as to me, dear brother, I want to go there to you, for here we work but we can produce nothing, for whenever we make a few cents, at once there is an expense, and it looks as if one measured the water, and the water is always there. . . . . So I beg you, describe to me what you think, what you think about yourself and about me. . . . .

[FRANCISZKA and] FRANEK J.

267 June 12, 1914

DEAR SON AND BROTHER: . . . . When you write, describe to us how far from Chicago you will go to this farm. Now describe to us whether this land is fertile, and how many morgs. For we would dissuade you from this intention. In our country there are terrible

is to be explained the fact, often noted with astonishment by the peasants themselves, that the facility of adaptation of emigrants to their new environment is not proportional to the degree of their intelligence and culture. It evidently depends upon the merely negative ability of the man to limit his sphere of activity.

The only criterion of intelligence is therefore the width of the sphere of activity within which the man can be successful, the range of problems which he is able to solve. The mere faculty of adaptation depends only mediately upon the degree of intelligence. In a completely new environment an intelligent man will more easily find soluble problems within his reach than a stupid one. But, on the other hand, his claims are greater, and thus subjectively his chances may be equal or less. The stupid Kanikuła is much happier in America than the intelligent Piotrowski or Porzycki. (Cf. those series.) And this criterion of intelligence depends in turn upon a feature with regard to which the Kanikuła series is particularly instructive—the range of interest. It could hardly be narrower than it is here.

To this general point of view we shall return in a later volume, when we attempt to appreciate the intellectual evolution of the peasant during the last thirty years under the influence of the movement of "enlightenment."

The Kanikuła correspondence covers two and a half years. Four letters, very much like the first, are omitted —three asking for money and one expressing thanks for money. The family solidarity seems to be preserved. The son, indeed, did not send money home at once, but probably he could not.

KANIKUŁA SERIES

In contrast with the preceding materials—relatively intelligent and showing a great variety of interests—we place here the most stupid series of our whole collection.

The letters—their style, the manner of dating them, etc.—show a very low degree of intellectual development. Two of the letters are dated: "The present day of the present month." On receiving from us a money-order, the son protested, saying that he expected money and received a mere scrap of paper—and this after three years in America. He did not know how to write his own address.

Now this series discloses the meaning of the peasant's stupidity. This does not manifest itself in an inability to manage the normal, habitual business of life. The Kanikułas know well enough how to farm, to make good marriages, to buy land, etc. And the most ignorant peasant may be quite successful within the usual circle of practical problems. Perhaps, indeed, in the peasant tales the success of the youngest, stupid son is precisely the expression of the fact that lack of development of the reflective faculties goes along very well with practical cleverness. (Cf. Introduction: "Theoretic and Aesthetic Interests.") The usually admitted manifestation of stupidity is the inability to adapt one's self to new practical situations. But even this criterion is not exact enough. Indeed, a new situation is seldom immediately imposed by the environment and passively accepted by the individual; usually the latter selects out of a diversity of external circumstances some practical situations among many others equally possible, and tries, consciously or instinctively, to select only such problems as he is more or less able to solve. In this way, for instance,

roubles back to Hanusia [sister]. Other people have sent some hundred roubles each. Karol Smotryś sent 300 roubles and Piotr Podolak, Paulina's husband, 200, and Piotr, Paweł's son, sent 100, and you don't send anything to us. You know, when you wanted it and you could borrow nowhere a single rouble, we helped you, and you have forgotten about us. When you needed [money] you said you would send it immediately when you got there, and you have been there half a year already and don't send. Other people don't do like you. They have sent already, and you did not. [More complaints and admonitions.]

[PIOTR KANIKUŁA]

271 Letter written on May 20, 1913

. . . . And now we inform you that here Joszt is parceling a field, so if you sent us money, we would take some land, not for anybody else, but for yourself. And Anusia requests you to send her [money] also, because she would also take some land. She needs [money] for everything, because he [her husband] does not serve now. You don't owe her much more, and yet you don't send back those few roubles. Then send money, and we will take some land. [Greetings, wishes; repeated requests for money.]

PIOTR KANIKUŁA

272 Letter written on April 15, 1914

. . . . We are already very bad. Father is ill, our old years are very bad, because we have no health. Now we thank you very much, dear son, for your letter and postcard, we thank you very much for not forgetting that we live in this world. So we wish you blessing from God. Be married, with God, and may God help you to be married happily, and let God bless you first, and then we bless you and wish you every good from God the Merciful. . . . . And don't forget about us as long as we live in the world, and may God allow us to see you, dear children.

You wrote that Smotryś is no longer alive—that his wife poisoned him. It is not true. Who could invent it so and so [in such detail]? How do people make a dead man of a living? What you wrote about Stach—that he married Helena Łoza—it is true. He married her against the will [of her parents], he drove her to Grabowiec and

268–72, FROM PIOTR KANIKUŁA, IN POLAND, TO HIS SON, IN AMERICA

268 Letter written on the present day of the present month [1912, Spring]

[Usual greetings, wishes; information about weather.] And now, dear son, we inform you about this money that you sent, that we received it and answered you directly. [One page about letter-writing follows.]

[PIOTR KANIKUŁA]

DEAR BROTHER-IN-LAW, I beg you very much, describe to me . . . . how it is there in America, and how is the work now, whether good or bad . . . . because I want to go to you. Dear brother-in-law, I shall ask you to help me in some manner to get to America, because in our country nothing can be done. The wages are now very small. . . . . I have nothing more to write. Goodbye.

[JÓZEF]

269 Letter written in 1912 [Spring]

[Usual greetings; letter received.] And now, dear son, we beg you very much to send us money. Don't forget about us, because it is more and more difficult for us to work in our old days. Father has sprained his hand and cannot work, and you went away and took with you every penny wherever it was, and you left us without a penny, so if (God forbid!) death comes, we shall have not a penny. . . . . And Józef, your brother-in-law, had no work in the factory during the whole winter, only walked about Huszczka, and now he has gone to Chełm, since Easter. [More asking for money and describing bad conditions.] And now, dear son, I ask you, where did you put the ax? Write, where you put it, so we shall not have to search for it. . . . .

PIOTR KANIKUŁA

270 Letter written on June 8, 1912

. . . . We send you already the third letter and you don't answer. Have you forgotten about us already, or what? And you don't send money, although we need it very much, because Joszt is parceling a field, so we would take some morgs. You don't even send those few

TOPOLSKI SERIES

The family is now living in a town and working in a factory, but they came from the country. There is therefore some difference between the parents and the children; the latter are already developing to some extent the features of townspeople, while the parents are typical peasants. The relation between parents and children assumes a particular form; the children are totally independent and the parents try to keep up the country-relations, not by authority, but by sentiment.

THE FAMILY TOPOLSKI

Topolski, a factory-worker
His wife
Wacław (Wacek) } his sons
Antek
Janek
Stefek
Bronka } his daughters
Józia
Stasia (Stachna)
Michałowski, Bronka's husband
G——, an aunt of Stasia
Michał } cousins
Edzio

273–80, TO STASIA TOPOLSKA, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND

273 OSTROWIEC, March 20, 1912

DEAR CHILDREN: . . . . We write this letter on Good Wednesday, for Stefek came for the holidays and he writes it, while Antek does not want to write. He would prefer to be sick for 3 days rather than write one letter. . . . . We gave the process to a lawyer. . . . . Your father aspires and prays to God that he may go to Kujawy [the

there they got married. Because Łoza did not wish her to marry him, he married her against his will. Now they are sitting in the house of Józwa, but Łoza refuses to give her anything.

[News about weather.] Dear son, don't forget about us. Our dear children, remember about us old people, because you know that we have now to live like small children. As we formerly cared for you, so now it is our turn to be cared for by somebody. I repeat, we are now like small children whom somebody must dress and put their shoes on and feed them. [Greetings, blessings; request for letters.]

[PIOTR KANIKUŁA]

Now the wife of Józef greets very much her husband and the son greets his father.[1] . . . .

[1] Kanikuła evidently took his brother-in-law to America.

the people say that it is bad in America, that this new president is not good, that factories have stopped and only a few of them are active, that he has diminished the pay for work, and that he endeavors not to admit the Poles into America, saying that they spoil the people there.[1] All this is more grief for us, for while you did not lose much, Wacław had money and good work and lost it all. If he does not get work there, it will be bad. Write us about everything. . . . . Did you get acquainted with somebody from Ostrowiec? If not, try to do it.[2] Write us whether you are boarding with somebody else or cooking for yourself, and about Wacek also, whether you both are not homesick. For while you have been away from home for a long time [she was first in Russia], Wacław left the home for the first time so we don't know how he feels. [News about the factory in which the father is working.] Janek [brother] has left that girl in Kunów, for she wanted him to rent an apartment for her in Ostrowiec and to furnish it, while he wanted to go to her [to live in her parents' house] for some time, until they earn and put aside more money. As he had not money enough [for the apartment], they separated.[3] [Politics; calls for military service; condemnations of political offenders.] There is no more news, but you must describe your journey, what they gave you to eat upon the ship, how much money you spent, and everything. . . . . Write us regularly, a letter every two weeks. . . . .

YOUR PARENTS and EVERYBODY FROM HOME

275 February 26, 1913

DEAR CHILDREN: . . . . We are curious how you look now, Stasia. We imagine that you must look very bad, because you grieve [are homesick]. But nothing can be done, it must be so for some time. Antek K. went to America. He did not wish to go to the

[1] The childish idea of the president's influence upon social and economic life is evidently the result of two factors—familiarity with the idea of absolutism and the enormous agitation which precedes the presidential election.

[2] Parents are always glad when their children find in America people of their own village or neighborhood. There is thus maintained some semblance of community interest, oversight, and mutual aid.

[3] The reason seems trifling. Among peasants where the question of an independent home is connected with the question of a farm, such an attitude would be justifiable, and even then a girl would hardly object to her husband's living for some time with her parents. Here the evident motive is vanity—a vanity of the type which develops in towns.

farm which is the object of the lawsuit], if it were only one hour before dying, and not hear any more this bullying in the factory. . . . .[1] Bronka wrote to us that Michałowski [her husband] teases her in his letters. She complains that she is unhappy. She has always some misunderstandings with him. And you there [Stasia], keep away from Michałowski, lest people ascribe to you some [evil] things, for Malczykowa asked already whether you are not living in the same apartment.[2] Has Michałowski sent some money to his wife? . . . . Write us what work is Wacław doing. . . . . Bronka also wonders that in your letters to her you mention little about Wacław. Janek is such a disorderly boy as he has always been; he does not put any money aside. We had hardly put 40 roubles in the bank for him when he drew it and bought a bicycle.[3] And if he has some trouble in the factory he comes and asks us to gather any money that we have, saying that he will go to America. For the holidays we have 30 pounds of flour, 12 pounds of ham and a leg of veal. Michał brought all this from Iwaniska. . . . .

EVERYBODY FROM HOME

274 December 29, 1912

DEAR STASIA: We received your letter . . . . and we were very much rejoiced, but when we read it we wept. Why did you leave Wacław [brother with whom she went to America] thus? You ought to remain with him and to come back together. God knows what has become of him? Perhaps in such a big city he cannot find you. What did we suffer until we got this letter from you! People said that you were arrested [while crossing the frontier] and put into prison, others said that you were sent back by *etapes* [from prison to prison to the native village]. Jula, from Kielce, said that the ship stopped in the sea and no ship was permitted to go. And now

[1] Longing for land and for independence. The feature is almost universal among peasants who work in factories in Poland, but is weakened or disappears in America.

[2] This suspicion would hardly arise in a village. Bronka is Stasia's sister, and a relation between Stasia and her husband would be felt as almost incestuous.

[3] Were the family living in the country, the father would probably not allow Janek to withdraw the money. For example, the money earned by the children at season-work in Germany, even if not given to the parents for spending, is nevertheless almost always given to them to keep until the son or daughter marries.

ceeded in persuading Wacław [to go with you]. Probably your time passes more pleasantly together. Are you healthy at least? I really cannot imagine that you are there at the other end of the world; I should not muster courage enough to do it. I admire you. . . . .

God, O my God! What does destiny do with man! He finds himself suddenly there beyond the sea. Man is like a ball. I feel this all, I have experienced it myself to some extent, this working for a piece of bread, ... but I should not have equaled your boldness in leaving your country and your native home.[1] I imagine your fear, your regret, your fears! My dear, God has seen all this. . . . . The Highest Creator will reward you, since he has tried you thus. The confidence in God's mercy never deceives anybody. Perhaps God will grant you some good lot in reward for that trouble and labor which you have borne up to the present.[2] O God! don't fail to come with help to them. From my poor side, I wish you to come back happy and to reach the end for which you left your home, and may the presence of the Highest always be a witness of your lot.

You ask about my children. [Information about children.] Józia [Stasia's sister] was here not long ago and mentioned that you dissuaded her from marrying a widower. But I understand her very well. He is an honest and laborious man, and the children don't play any part. The boy is 5 years old and can even be useful, while both the girls are kept by their grandmother. The girl [Józia] is not in her first youth. Moreover, he liked her [fell in love with her].[3] I advised her to marry him. I told her that if she is good she will be happy [of] herself. Have you no opportunity [to marry] there? I advise you also to marry, not to wait and not to select, for this is the worst. As long as you are in good health all is well. I notice it in myself. Evidently it is easier to hold out someone's else back [to be beaten] than one's

[1] The difference between the older and younger generations is here clearly expressed. Indeed, the emigration of women (not going to their husbands) is a comparatively recent phenomenon.

[2] The suffering as such is here considered as a sufficient claim on God's reward although no one obliged the girl to go to America.

[3] It is characteristic that the usual term still used in the country for love before marriage (love without either sexual relation or marriage-tie) is "liking," not "loving," while between parents and children or brothers and sisters the term "loving" is current.

army, he preferred America. He took your address. . . . . You cannot imagine how many people go to America. Soon very few will remain in our country. We are curious whether Michałowski sent some money to his wife. Write us exactly about everything, how you like it in America. How does the food taste to you, for we hear that the cooking is different there? Write us whether you did not meet somebody else of your acquaintance. Perhaps you feel better now than in the beginning. Did you dance during the last days of carnival? For Rem. wrote that he danced so much as to lose his heels. My dear Stasia, when you write a letter, write it in the presence of Wacek, that he may dictate a few words in his own name, for it is so painful for us—as if he were not there. We know nothing about him. . . . . And yourself, you write such short letters, there is nothing to read, although you are in such a distant country. . . . . Now we inform you about this lawsuit. The lawyers assure us that we shall win. We have asked two and they both say it. . . . .

YOUR PARENTS and EVERYBODY FROM HOME

276 April 22, 1913

DEAR CHILDREN: . . . . Our lawsuit about Kujawy will be judged on May 5. As soon as it is over we will write you at once. And we beg you, in the case we need money to pay this farmer's part, send us as much as you have. Ask even Michałowski to give you those 100 roubles back. We expect that if we win in Radom he will appeal to Warsaw. Then we should not need the money so soon. But perhaps he won't be able to appeal. . . . . You need not be afraid about your money, for it would not be lost if mortgaged upon the farm. Of the 100 roubles which Wacław left we spent 50 on this lawsuit, but we keep a pig which we bought for 7½ roubles after Christmas. Now we could get more than 30 for it. So if we don't win, we shall sell the pig and put the money in the bank[1] [to Wacław's account]. [News about friends, etc.]

YOUR PARENTS and EVERYBODY FROM HOME

277 DYMINY, August 22, 1913

DEAR STACHNA [STASIA]: I read your letter to Edzio. The content of the letter touched us very much. It is true that you have been courageous in going so far. This only is happy, that you suc-

[1] In these money matters the attitude of the parents is typically peasant.

you. But since you moved to another lodging evidently the address is bad. And instead of my writing reproaches to her, she writes to us! Instead of describing at length how she succeeds there, she sends a postcard, neither this nor that [without determined news]. Write us about this bachelor, whence is he, what is his name? Is it the same, from the province of Lublin, about whom you wrote, or another? But, my dear, you write that he has neither money nor work. Well, if you get married in America, you should at least make a career [marry well], or else you will both suffer misery. My Stasia, be careful about yourself and don't stain yourself again [?].[1] As long as Wacek was there, I was not so anxious, while now I fear more about you. Write us whether you have seen Michałowski, for his wife was with us when we wrote this letter and said that she knew everything about him from Staszewski, who had lived with him. He sent 100 roubles for her, but has not yet given the debt back to Wacek. . . . .

[YOUR MOTHER and] EVERYBODY FROM HOME

280 July 12 [1914]

DEAR STASIA: We received your letter . . . . with the photograph, but instead of getting comfort, we wept, for probably you won't come back if you marry there. You wrote here once about that bachelor, that he would not come back, so we don't know whether it is the same or another. For your mother and father it is very painful, for they won't remain long upon this world. But what can be done? If you cannot do otherwise, we don't bind you lest you should complain about us later on.[2] You write us nothing about him; we don't know whence he is and what is his name, whether he is some skilled workman, whether he has some money. For when two poor people come together, it is not very good. And he is probably old, for indeed everybody says that he looks [on the photograph] as if he were

[1] In the original it is not clear whether the word *znów* (again) has the meaning, "for the second time," or is used as a particle strengthening the advice.

[2] The parents are evidently opposed to this marriage, but they do not dare to urge their opposition, (1) because a poor marriage is better than none; (2) because they are afraid of a complaint from their daughter (equivalent to a curse) if she should remain an old maid through their interference; and (3) because the girl is already partially independent.

own. But I shall wait soon for news about your marriage.[1] It is to be hoped that such a girl as you are should not waste her time there. . . . .

[YOUR AUNT] G.

278 OSTROWIEC, February 9, 1914

DEAR STASIA: We received your letter on Feb. 1, and Wacław came back on Feb. 3. He came in good health, had no accident. The crossing of the frontier cost him 4 roubles. . . . . He says that he is bored here, he regrets that he came back. As to the work, we don't know yet—for he has not yet asked anybody—whether he will get any or not. . . . . Your father keeps well, but he could not be a shooter anymore, for he does not see well. When he comes back from the factory he often falls or jostles people. In Ostrowiec it is as warm as in summer. If we were in Kujawy, we should think about sowing, while as it is probably that farmer will sow for us. We are tired with waiting. It seems to us as if there were 10 years left until the end of this suit. But what can we do? When we were the plaintiffs the suit was soon decided, but now he is the plaintiff, and we can do nothing. . . . . Wacek asks you to thank the agent who said that he would go 6 days [by sea], while he went 10. He regrets now that he came and says that in the spring he will go back. That would be a trouble for us, if he went back, took the money, and we should have nothing to pay for Kujawy. Nobody feels it as much as I do [the mother], for I should like to get there as soon as possible, while it lasts so long. . . . .

YOUR PARENTS

279 May 21 [1914]

DEAR STASIA: You know that you worry me now in writing that we have forgotten about you. Why, we sent two postcards and two letters after Easter. And now I am obliged to send you a letter without a stamp, for evidently you gave a bad address. You may know that there is not an hour during the day without my thinking of

[1] The aunt and the parents retain the traditional attitude as to the necessity of marrying, but the aunt cares less than the parents whether the girl makes a good match. Cf. Nos. 279, 280.

SĘKOWSKI SERIES

Up to the present we have had to do with families of peasant farmers. Here we find a family of manor-employees. Jan Sękowski, the father, is probably a farm-clerk or a land-steward. He has some education. His letters are written in rather good Polish. The other letters of the family are on the average not above the usual level of peasant letters. But a letter which Mania wrote to us in sending the letters shows an astonishing progress made during her four years in America. Perhaps it is due to her husband's influence. She is one of the few of our peasant correspondents showing an interest in our work.

The manor-life develops features which differ to some extent from those of the peasant farmers. The series therefore assumes a particular importance. There are over two million manor-servants (families included) in Poland. The main bulk of them are the so-called *parobeks*, i.e., those who do physical farm-work (plowing, sowing, harvesting, threshing, driving, etc.). Then come the cattle-, pig-, and sheep-herders, forest-guards, watchmen, etc.; then handworkers (blacksmiths, carpenters, gardeners, millers), then private servants (butlers, cooks, maids, grooms, laundresses, coachmen), and finally the "officials" (overseers, clerks, stewards, cashiers, managers, distillers, head foresters). A rather small estate has thirty to forty servants, most of them married; a relatively large estate, of some seven or eight thousand acres, has two hundred to three hundred servants; but there are estates which keep many more than this, although the largest ones, from about twenty thousand to three hundred thousand acres (or over) have partly the tenant system. Thus, the manorial organization exerts a

more than forty and as if he had gray hair. He must not have been for a long time in America, for he wears whiskers not in the American fashion, cut and fixed, but hanging down in disorder. But if he is an honest and good man, don't mind anything. For us it matters only that we might see you some day. . . . .

We kiss you a thousand times. We hope that you will send us a letter before your wedding. Don't give him this letter to read, lest he be offended.

YOUR FAMILY

overseer or clerk. This is Sękowski's position. It is easy to understand how many insignificant interests, petty vanities, and ridiculous fights result from this system.

Another feature, still more negative, which manorial life tends to develop, is petty dishonesty. The control of the employees in a manor is particularly difficult because of the complexity of the functions, the difficulty of introducing a permanent division of labor, and a corresponding specification of responsibilities, etc. The temptation to steal is stronger here than anywhere else, because of the old prepossession that "stealing" means stealing only money, cattle, horses, or manufactured things, while stealing natural products which serve to maintain human or animal life is simply "taking" and hardly reprehensible. It becomes reprehensible when these products are stolen *and sold*, but the difference is easily overlooked.

Egotism is also more easily developed in manorial life than in village life. The idea of *mutual help* and of collaboration scarcely exists. The manor-servants look for help to the owner, not to one another; there is no mutuality and no reciprocity, as in help between equals. Instead of this, another solidarity develops—the *complicity* in laziness and stealing. Only during the regenerating movement of the last twenty years has the idea of the *solidarity of general interests* of manor-servants *as workers*—the counterpart of the socialistic idea—succeeded in developing; and it has resulted in many successful strikes, in which, nevertheless, only the lower workers, not the manor-officials, took part.

In familial relations the influence of the manorial life is also rather negative as compared with that of the village life. There is indeed no rivalry and no struggle among children for inheritance, but there is also no solidarity resulting from common interests. The father does not look upon his

powerful influence upon country life, and this extends beyond the sphere of the manor-servants, because there is intermarriage between them and the farmers, and a ruined farmer, or his children, frequently goes into service.

The characteristics which the life of a manor-employee tends to develop are rather negative. The dependence upon the manor-owner is much greater than that of employees upon employer in the city, because the whole life of the manor-employee is spent in the manor, and even his private life is not completely his own. At the same time, we find in addition to the business relation a social hierarchy much more rigid than in the town. A higher employee in a town business may be received in his employer's house, may marry his daughter, may become his equal if he makes money; the manor-official is once and forever outside of the social sphere of his noble employer—unless, of course, he is a ruined noble himself, or his employer's relative. On the other hand, the manor-official tends to keep between himself and the physically working servants the same distance as that which separates him from his employer. In this way the system always keeps alive the idea that social hierarchy is something absolute. In accordance with this idea, humility toward the superior and arrogance toward the inferior appear quite natural; no moral condemnation of any kind is attached to them.

Moreover, while we have distinguished only three degrees in this hierarchy—the employer, the official, the servant—there are in fact many more. On a large estate there is a continuous gradation from the head manager down to the unmarried *posyłka* (servant helping the *parobek*) involving sometimes as many as six or seven degrees of social (not merely business) hierarchy. On the other hand, on a very small estate the distinctions between employees may be rather small, as the highest type of employee may be an

281–95, LETTERS FROM THE SĘKOWSKI FAMILY, IN POLAND, TO FAMILY-MEMBERS IN AMERICA

281 ŁAZY, December 5, 1909

DEAR HUSBAND: I inform you that we are in good health, and we wish to you also the best health and success from our Lord God. Dear husband, the third star[1] [Christmas] approaches already since you have been far away from us in that foreign country. Dear husband, there is no more painful moment for me than when I remember that you are there far away and quite alone. So we send you a star and at the same time I divide a wafer[2] with you. Dear husband, as to our coming, you must know first whether we have good eyes. Dear husband, so we shall go to to Poznań, when we shall know certainly that we are going. Dear husband, I beg you in the name of everything in the world, don't change your word. For I won't write you [ask you] any more about it, because you wrote [as if reproaching] that I wanted absolutely to come to America. Dear husband, it is true, but don't be afraid [of my coming, for I will be a good wife]. For I know what [a life] I had when you were at home, how you always made my heart joyful. Dear husband, I did not know at all how to respect [appreciate] you.[3] But now, dear, and only now, I know

[1] The word is used in connection with Christmas ceremonies to indicate (1) the first star on Christmas eve, with the appearance of which the supper, the most important ceremony, begins; (2) the Christmas celebration in general; (3) the Christmas gifts; (4) stars cut out of paper, wafers, etc., hung upon the Christmas tree or sent in letters as Christmas tokens; (5) a transparent and illuminated star of paper or glass with which boys walk about the village on Christmas night, singing, offering wishes, asking for gifts.

[2] The consecrated wafer plays an important, partly magical, rôle. It is consecrated before Christmas and during the eve supper the members of the family divide a part of it among themselves and, while eating, express wishes, evidently with a half-conscious idea of a power inherent in the wafer to fulfil wishes, and with the conscious idea of communion. The rest is kept and used during the year, more or less with the idea of its healing properties; powders are preferably taken in connection with it. Preparing and selling wafers is the privilege of organists.

[3] We have seen (Introduction: "Marriage") that "respect" is the fundamental norm of conjugal relations. The love included within the norm of respect is not romantic or sensual love. Sensual love as such is clearly outside of the idea of normal, that is, perfect conjugal relations. And while it exists in young marriages, it is not to be spoken of; it is considered as being something indecent. There is, for example, a letter from a peasant in the newspaper *Zaranie* describing how a priest in his wedding-address condemned sensual abuses, but spoke of them so

children as upon collaborators and helpers, but as upon a burden of which he tries to get rid as soon as possible (as Sękowski does) by sending them away to work on their own account. When the children have left their parents' home, nothing else keeps them together, and there is no tendency to return. As most of the manor-servants wander from place to place, there are no stable associations with a determined locality. The egotism and hardness of the parents in village life are tempered by the idea that their children will inherit the farm upon which they have worked during their whole life, and will continue their work; the sphere of interest includes the future generations. In manorial life the only interest which makes the parents care for the future of their children is the hope that one of the children will take them when they are unable to work.

THE FAMILY SĘKOWSKI

Jan Sękowski, a manor-employee
His wife
Adam (Adaś) } his sons
Tadeusz (Tadzio) }
Kazia } his daughters
Mania (Maryanna) }
Leosia (Leokadya) }
Frania (Franka), Adam's wife
Teodor Kacperski, Kazia's husband
Janek, Mania's husband
Żytniewski and wife, Sękowski's parents-in-law
Mańka, their granddaughter
Staśka, niece of Sękowski's wife
"The aunt," Staśka's mother
Walenty, the aunt's second husband

a hopeless letter. So I beg you, dear brother, if now it is difficult for you, then do it a little later, in the beginning or in the end of May. . . . . Why, I will pay you back as soon as I earn, if I only come happily there. I have learned sewing and in any case I can do other work also. . . . . I should like to earn a little more, for here I shan't earn anything, even if I go to Prussia. And in Prussia one must also work, perhaps worse than in America. Only, dear brother, if I could go together with Frania! It would be better also for her during the journey, and afterward we could work together. . . . .

Your sister,

MARYANNA [MANIA] SĘKOWSKA

283 February 17, 1910

DEAR SON: I received your last letter. I am very much pained that you have such bad luck, while others, impotent and lazy fellows, earn nice money. But nothing can be done. You ought not to lose hope and courage. Where fear is the greatest God's help is the nearest. Who perseveres to the end will be saved, only patience and perseverance are needed. You know that I also had often hard and painful times, but I suffered and only asked God for any improvement of my lot. And our Lord God helps willingly, if that improvement is really necessary, for everything is good, whatever God does. And therefore at the end of such a prayer one must say: "Not mine, but Thy will, O God, be done."

You say that the hernia pains you. Probably you do not always wear the belt. I got it also, for during the digging of potatoes I had to put them into the cart . . . . but as soon as I noticed it, I went to Poznań and bought a belt and now I feel very well. . . . . Evidently, if you wish absolutely to come home, I have nothing against it,[1] but is it not a pity to spend more than 100 roubles upon the journey, when you have no money? And then, what will you do, go to Prussia [for season-work]?[2] Don't trouble yourself about Franka. If she is

[1] The unwillingness to have his son back and perhaps a burden to himself is in interesting contrast with the attitude of any farmer, who at the worst asks his son to wait until he has earned some money, but always wants him to return ultimately. Cf. Markiewicz series, Osiński series, etc.

[2] The practice of going to Prussia, although very much developed, is not looked upon as desirable in itself, only as a necessity. It is considered well for a boy or a girl to go for two or three years, get together a dowry, and become a little acquainted with the wide world, but those who make their living in this way are rather despised.

how necessary it is to respect the husband, as the conjugal duty orders.

Dear husband, I inform you also about our daughter, how intelligent she is. When I ask her, "What will father buy you?" she says, "Shoes." She says, "Dear papa, Mania will go to papa."

I wish you health and happiness for your name-day, dear Adaś.

Mania [sister] begs you to find a nice boy for her.[1] But she begs you not to write about it, for father reads every letter. When we come to you we shall speak of it. I greet you kindly and heartily, and goodbye.

Your loving wife and daughter,

[FRANIA]

282 February 1 [1910]

DEAR BROTHER: I have a little wish [request] for you. You wrote before that you would send ship-tickets for Frania and for me, and that we should go together to America, and now you sent us such

---

realistically as to make his hearers indignant. This is the reason we so seldom find expressions of love in conjugal letters, particularly if these are dictated. In one letter from America (Struciński series) a husband makes to his wife some sensual allusions but immediately begs her pardon.

The best illustration of the antithesis of conjugal feelings within the norm of respect and outside of this norm is afforded by the practice of *beating*. Beating one's wife is evidently among the worst actions from the standpoint of the norm of respect. But between young people it harmonizes perfectly with *love*. A young woman often likes to be beaten, particularly when the husband beats her because he is jealous, because the wife is not demonstrative enough, or refuses marital relations. Beating is then considered a proof of love; a woman considers herself wronged, not loved, when the husband never beats her. Women speak with pride of being beaten, and are unhappy because of the indifference of husbands who do not beat them. Any interference in these cases ends badly for the interfering person, who may be beaten by man and wife together. Evidently, such an attitude toward beating is to be understood only upon the sexual basis. The attitude is quite the contrary when the pair (or the husband) is old, when the reason of beating has nothing to do with the reciprocal relations of man and wife, as, for example, when the man beats his wife in some quarrel about money or about the children.

[1] There is a general and justified opinion among Polish girls that it is very easy to get married in America and that the Polish-American husbands are better. This explains partly the fact that girls are willing to go to an unknown man who asks them in marriage (cf. the case of Staśka in this series), and in general that they risk going alone to America while they are often afraid to go alone to the nearest town in their own country.

will still give you health! Only I am very anxious because of my dreams, for I had them very bad. Dear husband, if you live still, answer me as soon as possible, for my heart will be grieved until I receive news that you live still. Dear husband, I should prefer to die rather than you should die. For what should I do if you were to die?[1] I put all my hope in you! Dear husband, I am even unable to describe this pain which I have upon my heart. But never mind for myself—but the child! If you knew how she rejoiced that she would go to you! These last days she continually pointed at you[r photograph], saying, "This is my papa, and this [the old Sękowski] is papa's papa." And she was so glad that she would go to her papa! And she loved [caressed?] you so, as if someone had ordered her.[2] But we did not tell her at all; she did it of herself. And all this was for this pain and grief! When we tell her that her father is sick and mother will go to Prussia, she says, "Mama won't go Prussia, but will go with Mania to papa." If she sees that I am weeping she begins to cry and does not allow me to weep. Dear husband, I greet you kindly and heartily.

YOUR LOVING WIFE and YOUR DAUGHTER

I commend you to our Lord God and I pray to our Lord God that He may give you health and that we may see one another. And if not upon this world, may we merit to see one another in the other world.

286 December 13, 1910[3]

DEAR SISTER MANIA: . . . . Tadzio is very glad that you will send him money for a new suit. He knows already how to read and to write a little, and now he says that he will learn still better. . . . . We have now two boarders, both from Prussia. One of

[1] This letter shows traces of tears and is perhaps the strongest expression of conjugal love in our collection. The traditional form of conjugal relation, as a mere familial relation, here breaks down completely; the married couple becomes a unique, almost isolated, social group. We shall follow later the same process in detail in other series. Here the conjugal relation is more easily liberated from the familial ties because in manorial life those ties themselves are not very strong.

[2] The word "loving" for "caressing" is very often used; the peasants are indeed little inclined to caress, and a caress is always the expression of a strong feeling.

[3] One letter preceding this one is omitted. It contains Jan's enumeration of the expenses of the journey of Mania and Frania to America.

tired with staying in our home she may go to service,[1] and everywhere it will be well. Thus she ought not to dream about America, but she will go to Prussia. And then you can write to each other. . . . .

We all greet you most kindly.

Your father,

J. Sękowski

284 March 18, 1910

Dear Son: We all at home wept about your misfortune, and we try to find some way to improve your lot, but we are unable to do anything. God alone is left to you, and He will help you without doubt, only you must pray warmly to Him. But at the same time don't let your hands fall, try in every way. Sometimes it is even necessary to humiliate one's self deeply, but one must not mind it. . . . .[2] May God help you.

Your father,

J. Sękowski

285 March 18, 1910

Dear Husband: I inform you about our health, that we are in good health, only for me there is no greater pain of the heart than that God has sent you such a sickness in that foreign country. Dear husband, what may not happen with you there when you are so severely sick! Who takes care of you in this sickness? My heart cannot bear any longer this grief about your misfortune! What conditions do you have there, in that America? Dear husband, if God grants you to recover, and if you see that the conditions are bad in that America, come home! I will go again to season-work. Dear husband, I beg you, if God still gives you health, write to me and describe to me everything about your illness. If this letter [finds] you still alive! For I think that you are no more alive. Dear husband! How I wanted to see you once more before your death! For you know how I have loved you, and I never have lost hope in God, and even now I don't lose it totally. Perhaps our Lord God

[1] A farmer would never allow his daughter-in-law to go into service; he would consider it derogatory to his son and himself.

[2] This is the phrase to which the writer's daughter Kazia Kacperska alludes when she says that "father told Adam to beg." In fact, this is an advice which a farmer would hardly give his son, while it shows that the writer's attitude in these matters is influenced by his servile position.

If the Żytniewskis [wife's parents] come we shall be almost obliged to support them. Then I should like your mother and Tadeusz to go to you, and I should still remain for some time with the grandparents, and grandmother would keep my house. . . . . I will tell Tadeusz to write you also something in the evening, for I have nothing more to write. Only he does not want much to write, saying that he has enough of his own writing [for the school].

[J. SĘKOWSKI]

288 [March 20, 1912]

DEAR SISTERS: I received your card, for which I thank you heartily, for remembering me. . . . . And now I beg you, economize as much money as possible, that I may come some day to you with mother and father. And now I inform you also about those ducks of yours. You know, that gray duck, when she sees me far away she quacks and runs toward me.

I remain, your brother,

TADEUSZ SĘKOWSKI

289 April 9, 1912

DEAR FRANIA: I received your letter. . . . . Grandfather and grandmother Żytniewski came to us to stay, and they brought one granddaughter, 10 years old. What can I do? I cannot grudge a little food and a corner. As long as I am in Łazy they can be with me.[1] [News about work, friends, and acquaintances.]

J. SĘKOWSKI

290 January 15, 1913

DEAR DAUGHTER [MANIA]: So at last that time has come to you when the human lot is totally changed. From a maiden you will become a married woman, from a free being a slave of your husband and of fortune, from a merry and lively [girl] you will become sad, for there is no true happiness in this world; it exists only after death, and then only for the chosen ones. In this world there is a valley of tears, nothing but anxiety, suffering, and different troubles which we must bear patiently in order to merit that true happiness. We

[1] We see in this example how the supporting of aged parents is felt as an absolute obligation. Even the old miser Sękowski, who drives all his children away to work, cannot begrudge his wife's parents a place with him.

them . . . . speaks Polish, but the other does not. They are the kind of engineers who put water-pipes in the manor. Both are still unmarried. We killed a pig not long ago, and I went to Kazia to take her some [meat]. I was there for a week, and Kazia made a skirt for me and for mother a ——— [illegible word] which I brought home. I had put some money aside for this journey, for I sweep the room of these gentlemen. . . . . Your hen is dead. . . . . Tereska's man has been taken to the army, and her sister has a child [illegal]. Józef went to America, and Zośka will also go before summer, for she was his girl. Kazimierz [Mania's sweetheart] is not taken to the army. . . . . He neither walks nor speaks with any girl, only is always very pensive. . . . . Dear Mania, mother is now so feeble and tired that she cannot work. As long as I am at home I do everything, but father talks already about my going to [season-] work. Could you write that I should not go, for I don't mind anything except mother.[1] Mother longs also for you. . . . .

Your sister,

LEOKADYA SĘKOWSKA

287 March 20, 1912

DEAR CHILDREN: . . . . Yesterday we had St. Joseph's holiday. In the afternoon we were with Tadeusz in Zagórów, for mother ordered a suit for him there, for 6 roubles. It will be ready for Sunday. We have now such nice and warm days; the pig is well fattened. He will be killed as soon as Kazia comes to help mother work. May God grant, dear children, your wishes to be fulfilled, that you may be able to take us some day to you, for here one cannot count for anything. As long as I can run [work] well they keep me, but when I get older, they will do the same with me as they did with Mr. R.[2]

[1] The situation shows once more the father's egotism and avarice; this attempt to drive the last daughter from the home while the mother needs her help could only exceptionally occur in a farmer's family.

[2] This insecurity of the manor-servant's position justifies to some extent his faults. It had been always the custom to support old manor-servants when they had served long in the same manor, but in later times changing of place has become more and more usual. Ten years ago an association was organized for the pensioning of the old manor-servants. A manor-servant can hardly put aside money enough from his salary to keep him in his old age. The only way to amass some capital is the illicit one, and there are indeed many manor-servants who have bought nice farms and houses in small towns. Sękowski evidently has money, although he does not acknowledge it.

not rejoice [expect] so long as I did not hear anything, but now, since I have been promised, I will wait patiently till it comes. I am very glad that I have a son-in-law who is able to buy a gift for his father, while I must present gifts to Kacperski [other son-in-law]. He does not ask for them, but it would not be suitable otherwise.[1] On Easter they did not come to us, but on Pentecost they will certainly come, and mother always finds something to give them, while I give them 20 marks, as if for their traveling expenses. They don't wish to go to America, and probably they will never go, although a factory-workman like Kacperski would earn more in America than in Prussia. Be energetic with Tadeusz there, and make him learn well; the more and the better he learns the better it will be for him. As to the photograph, it is necessary only to know how to stand and to arrange one's self the best possible. Why does your mother look so well in her photograph? Because she is taken more from the side. Mother does not look so young today; she did perhaps 20 years ago. If you don't look well in your first photographs, I think that it is not the fault of the photographer, but your own. Still I don't intend to burn these photographs, for in a few years you will look exactly thus, and then they will be good. And now I wish you would have your photograph taken once more, but all of you together, and without any strange persons except those who belong now to our family. . . . . Janek's parents asked me to tell them how they could come from their locality to us, for they intend to visit us. But I doubt much whether they will risk it, the more so when I describe [the way] to them, for they are not far away from the railway, while we live about 10 miles [Polish = 50 English] from Kalisz, the nearest station.[2] . . . .

[1] Sękowski gave no dowry to any of his daughters, and even thus he complains of one son-in-law that he must give him presents, whereas he himself accepts presents from the other. Such an attitude would be normal in village life only in an old and helpless widow. A farmer, even a poor one, would accept a present from his son-in-law, but only because he considered that after his death the son-in-law would have the inheritance; and he would never grudge the giving of a present. He would consider Sękowski's attitude humiliating.

[2] The family lives near the German frontier. As the Russian government, for strategical reasons, did not allow the building of railways in this part of the country, while on the German side the railroads were numerous, the life of the frontier-districts is much more closely connected with the life of the Polish provinces in Germany than with that of central Poland. The season-emigration (in the district where the Sękowskis live, 20 per cent of the population goes every year to season-work) develops direct relations with central and western Germany and is a medium of German influence.

can never avoid misfortunes and we are unable to bear them with patience without the help of God. Therefore, may the Lord God who blessed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, this God who blessed our forefathers and who remembered us in His Providence, who will never forget His creatures up to the end of the world—may He bless you until the end of your life as your parents bless you now. In the name of the Father ✝, the Son ✝, and the Holy Spirit ✝, Amen. May God grant it. Amen.[1]

YOUR PARENTS

291 April 8, 1913

DEAR CHILDREN: Yesterday we received your letter and I answer you at once. First I inform you that we, i.e., your father, mother, and grandfather, are in good health and we wish you the same with our whole soul and heart. Grandmother and Mańka went to Kalisz, and Tadeusz is probably in the middle of the sea or already near America, and will be there sooner than this letter. You could have written sooner about feathers [for pillows], then Tadeusz would have taken them. Mańka Kowal won't go now; they have changed their mind, and first Kaziek will go and two daughters of Kamiński the miller.[2] They will surely go to Chicago, because a rich brother of Kamińska lives there, and I believe that the F's borrowed money from him for the exemption of Kazimierz from the army. Moreover mother says that you have enough feathers,[3] while Leosia has nothing, and what will Leosia say to it? Well, perhaps it would not matter much, these few feathers, but there won't be any opportunity [to send them] until I go with your mother. As to the gift from Janek, I did

[1] The pompousness of speech and the preaching attitude of this letter, as well as of some other of Sękowski's letters, are explained by the combined influence of religion and manorial life. They imply a relative superiority of the "preacher" over his hearers, and are found most frequently among men who are more or less outside of the proper peasant community and a little above it by their learning—organists, commune secretaries, shop-keepers, manor-employees, etc. As these men having no land property are looked upon by the peasant farmer with a curious mixture of superficial respect and a profound and hidden disdain, the display of their relative learning, particularly in divine and moral matters, is a means of securing and defending their superiority. The peasant is, in fact, much impressed by good speaking.

[2] Kaziek (Kazimierz) was formerly engaged to Sękowski's daughter.

[3] Feathers are the most necessary part of the dowry; the poorest girl must have a good feather-bed. Feathers and pillows are collected beyond the real necessity.

If it were near you could go there some Sunday and ascertain it personally, but it is very far. I think you would have to travel perhaps 3 days. Perhaps it is not so hot there as it would be if Florida were upon the continent, but it is a peninsula, not very wide, and therefore it may be cooler. At any rate I advise you to think about it day and night and when you have proofs that it is worth doing, then to set to work at once.

Let Tadeusz learn as much as possible, let him be assiduous and obedient, let him never offend Frania, that she may not have to complain about him when we see one another some day. . . . .

[J. Sękowski]

[Includes the draft of a letter to the Polish paper asking for advice about buying the farm.]

293 June 28, 1914

Dear Mania: We received the photograph of this Leonard, and a scrap instead of a letter, upon which you had written about Staśka.[1] . . . . Grandfather is with us, but so weak that it is impossible to use him; so mother went to Kalisz herself and spent a few days. Staśka would like to go, but your aunt is very angry about it. She quarreled at once with your mother, for she exploits Staśka a great deal.[2]

Staśka went to be photographed, but I don't know how she will look, for there was nobody to advise her and she will be photographed in full. Thus the face will be small and indistinct, and if she does not stand sidewise, but straight, the photograph may be quite unlike her. I said at once when your mother came back, "Why did you not advise her how the photograph ought to be and how she ought to stand?" Why is our photograph, i.e., mine and your mother's, so distinct, and why does your mother look in the photograph like a girl, although she is 50 years old? Staśka will send a copy here

[1] Staśka is the writer's wife's niece whom this Leonard, Mania's friend, wants to take to America and to marry without knowing her. For a similar case, cf. Butkowski series.

[2] This kind of parental egotism, where the parents hinder the marriage of their children because they wish to exploit their work, is really rare. The impulse to it is frequent, as we shall see more than once, but is usually counterbalanced by the stronger wish to see the children married. Cf. Introduction: "Marriage."

My father and mother live in Smulsk still. Some days ago I received a letter from my father in which he asks for a few roubles. I answered him and I promised [to send them] somewhat later, for now I have none, as I spent everything on Tadeusz['s journey]. But my father writes that he is already very feeble, and my mother also. He is 78, and mother 79 years old. If I can, I should be glad to visit them once more. . . . .

Your parents,

[J. Sękowski]

292 March 4, 1914

Dear Son: I received all your letters, the maps and the booklet. I looked over all this. At the first sight it seems very good and promising much; even if only one-half were true of what is printed in this booklet it would still be very good. In any case I advise you not to begin anything before you learn the truth. You have time enough, since you have not yet sold your house. So, as I wrote you in my preceding letter, ask your paper for advice. They write there precisely that they don't want to make a fortune from their paper, only to inform the Poles as much as possible. They will neither praise nor blame, but will write you the truth; they will perhaps even print it in the paper. Perhaps in the office of that paper in Chicago they know about these farms, and perhaps not; you could send them one such booklet, if you have any more, for it would be better if they first read the booklet and answered then.[1]

I believe you that factory work can become a bore, and that it will pay less and less, while living will be always more and more expensive, for people continually go to America. Write also to Franek, Leosia's [husband], and send him such a booklet if you can. He has money, and perhaps there, where he works, somebody knows Florida.

About all points it is necessary to ask everybody's advice, but not to listen and not to believe everybody, and above all not to try to catch the pigeon, letting the sparrow go, and then to have nothing.

[1] The old man's conceit is clearly manifested in this giving of advice without knowing the conditions. At the end of this letter he gives the text of the letter which his son ought to write to the paper. Another example is the question of photographs, which recurs in many letters. Evidently the manor-life, developing the tendency to keep as strong as possible small hierarchical distinctions, leads to the custom of asserting one's own superiority in any matters, however trivial.

Staśka would be glad to go but your aunt and her Walenty [her second husband] won't let her go from Kalisz, for Staśka has a good position there, while your aunt and Walenty suffer misery, because they both keep drinking heavily. Your aunt quarreled at once with your mother, so that the latter cried. I don't wonder, for the Żytniewski family [from which the aunt comes] is good only for drinking vodka, quarreling, and discord.[1] Staśka, as it seems, will be something else. As I noticed, she is intelligent, sparing, pretty enough, only somewhat too tall. Grandfather Żytniewski is with us . . . . but quite impotent [feeble *and* useless].

[J. Sękowski]

295 July 19, 1914

Dear Mania: Yesterday we received Staśka's photograph from Kalisz and today we send it to you. I don't know whether all this will succeed and whether Staśka's journey will come about. She wants to go to America; your aunt is not satisfied with it, but she cannot hinder it. Everything will depend upon how they write to each other and how their photographs please them. . . . . If they come to an understanding, I would advise you not to send a ship-ticket, but money . . . . for in the case of some unforeseen hindrance it is easier to get the money back. . . . . But send it to my address, for it is impossible to trust your aunt. They are in a bad situation, and very avaricious. . . . . If you don't receive any answer from Kalisz, don't think that it is Staśka who does not answer, but that perhaps somebody plays bad tricks, i.e., either her employers [she is a housemaid] or your aunt. So write simultaneously here and to Kalisz. Before Staśka leaves, we should like to bring her here and to send her from here upon the journey. . . . .

[J. Sękowski]

296 Bydgoszcz, November 23, 1913

Dear Mania: I received your letter with the photograph and I am very glad that you got such a man. But first of all, let him be good, for money is of no use if your life is not happy. When you

[1] This is a hard expression, as his own wife comes from this family and her parents live with him.

when it is ready, and I am to send it to you, but if it does not please me I will send it back and let her have another taken.

As to my opinion, I don't like to praise anybody much but I must confess that Staśka is a very good girl, intelligent, working, saving, handsome, only a little too tall and not instructed. But these are secondary faults. At any rate she deserves good luck. Today is precisely the twenty-ninth anniversary of our marriage with your mother. It was also Sunday, and St. Peter's and St. Paul's day on Monday. We have lived together for so many years, struggling with a various fortune [*sc.* rather bad], which is likely to be found in every marriage. Well, good or bad fortune must be accepted alike. . . . .

Our priest is still alive, but very feeble. . . . .

[J. Sękowski]

294 July 5, 1914

Dear Children: . . . . It is perhaps better that you did not succeed in selling your house, for there is no evil which does not turn to good.[1] Perhaps later you will sell it more profitably, and in America when you have money you can buy land at any moment; there is enough of it there. I thank Frania very much for her work upon Tadeusz. It is well that he is now with Leosia. Let everybody have a part of the trouble. And thus a day [will pass] after a day, a year after a year, and you won't even notice how he will reach his 16th year, and then, according to the American laws, he will be able to work himself. [News about acquaintances.]

From Mania I received a very strange letter. She and Leosia like to write much and to add larger and smaller scraps to the letter. And this letter had also such a scrap—and nothing more. . . . . Probably the letter was too thick and somebody hoped that there was money, opened the letter and did not put back the main sheet. . . . . Upon this scrap . . . . Mania writes us to send Józef's [daughter] Staśka to America, saying that she had a boy there who would send Staśka a ship-ticket. Mother was a week ago in Kalisz about this matter.

[1] This kind of optimism is nothing but the ultimate expression of the usual peasant resignation to the past and the irreparable which prevents him from being ever discouraged and always enables him to begin again. The emigration to Brazil afforded many such examples. Peasants who were born rich came back completely ruined and began at once as manor-servants to work and to economize with unrelenting energy and vitality.

thing so good. Do you remember how it was in Ruda at that party; how he danced with all the girls while I stood in the corner and wept? And this was only the first year. What must it be now, when 5 years have passed? I cannot write you everything.

I greet you a thousand times and wish you good sleep. Could you not have sent me at least a dollar, to drink some wine, for I was not at the wedding?

[KAZIA KACPERSKA]

Love each other, that you may have a child, a boy, in a year. Remember me and comfort me.

wrote that I could also have such luck Teodor [her husband] was terribly angry and is still angry with you. It is true that I could have also such luck. But no, even now I still fear to go to America, and when I was at home I was so timid that I would not have gone to Konin alone. If I had gone when father had ordered me, when Rozyna went from the manor, I should have fallen precisely into that misery. Perhaps I should not even live today, for you know how Adam had it how father told him to beg.[1] And I am so inclined to crying and so timid, I should never have talked to anybody [father or mother] about it. You know how it is with the Bajtlers now, how much Rozyna cost them [how large a dowry they gave] and what a splendid wedding it was. And now what has she?[2] You know that he wanted to shoot her down. Everybody must bear the lot which God designed for him. I have not a gay life either. I did not intend to write of it to you ever, but now over this letter of yours he made me suffer more than ever. You see how it happens. You know him, for he was in our house. Do you remember how good he was—like a child—and now he sins as if he were not the same man. Formerly he mended my stockings and made my bed when I was alone, and now he says that mother and father persuaded him and that we held him in order to make him marry me. And what did he say to me? He said that he would be so good that I should beat him rather than he me, that he would take me even in a single dress if father gave nothing, that he had 1,000 marks and this would be enough for everything. And now he says that it is not true, that he never said so. He reproaches me always that others got so and so much, and what did I get? And he denies that he ever said so [that he would take me without dowry]. May your husband only not be so false! I don't even wish to write home about it, for father would tell it to everybody, and it is a shame for us. Nothing can be done. . . . . I became a guiltless victim, for I thought that he loved me so of himself, while it was mother who persuaded him and gave him more than one glass of liquor. And now he reproaches me with all this. Father also plagued me and I did not have a merry life at home, while he painted everything so sweetly to me—that I should have every-

[1] Allusion to No. 284.

[2] Rozyna probably married the man the writer was to marry. Her allusions to dowry mean that a wife with a dowry has an additional right to good treatment.

attitude toward death which we find among the peasant traditions. Socially, death is a normal fact, and will be such for the individual in the exact measure in which the individual's attitude is socially determined. This view is corroborated by the fact that in any concrete case of death among the peasants today (if we abstract the remnants of the old naturalism and of the magical Christianity) the important part is played by the social-religious system, while the individual mystical attitudes are relatively little developed. Death is viewed by the dying person and by his relatives from the standpoint of the religious community to which the individual and his family belong; the interest in future life, the problem of the relation to God, are less absorbing than the questions of social ceremonies before and after death, and of the attitude of the family and the community toward the dying individual, of the common prayers to be said, masses to be celebrated, etc. This shows the extent to which social regulation of the attitude toward death is dominant.

In the present case, where the familial connection is weakened, one link of this social regulation is lacking. The death of Zygmunt and that of his mother are reacted upon in the socially determined way within the narrow circle of the nearest family on the one hand and within the widest circle of the community on the other, but not by the intermediary circle of the family in the wider sense, as including all relatives. (Cf. the behavior of Walery's father, in the Wróblewski series.) Further, in the case of Zygmunt's death there is a socially abnormal element—the extraordinary nature of his sickness. But otherwise, we find the typical attitudes—the calm, although sorrowful, expectation of death by the dying person and the family; the traditional farewell and blessing given to those who remain; the religious ceremonial before death (with its

MAKOWSKI SERIES

We find here again a modification of the fundamental peasant attitudes, due to the fact that the Makowskis are not farmers, but belong to the handworker class in a small town.

The letters of Antoni Makowski give us the expression of a paternal feeling distinct from that which we find in other series; it is a father's love without any assumption of authority or any patronizing. But this simple attitude is less primitive than the complex one of love and authority which we have seen in the earlier series. The lack of paternal authority implies a disintegration of the primitive familial group. This is proved in the present case by the familial quarrels alluded to in Makowski's letters and by the lack of solidarity of which he complains. The causes of this change are: (1) the fact that among the handworkers the old forms of social life, though slower to disappear in provincial towns than in large cities, dissolve more rapidly than in the country; (2) the emigration, both to America and to Prussia, of which the district of Przasnysz is one of the oldest centers. In consequence of this the father, in his relation toward his children, ceases to be the representative of the family-group and becomes a mere individual.

Another interesting point in this series is the attitude toward death. As noted elsewhere, death for the peasant is an important but normal phenomenon—normal not only as to theoretical reflection but also as to the sentimental reaction toward it. In the intelligent classes, on the contrary, the death of a beloved person is always reacted upon as an abnormal fact, in spite of the theoretical reflection. The difference has its source in the social regulation of the

Dear Staś we received the large photographs, but not the small ones. . . . . Probably they were stolen in the post-office, these photographs and the little crib [a colored paper imitation of a crib, one of the popular Christmas tokens, like stars, angels, Santa Claus, etc.]. We are pained that you have spent money and we have no benefit of it; you must labor for every grosz. It is a pity. . . . . You look very handsome in the photograph. How big you have grown! And this best girl looks rather pretty also. Who is she? Tell us where she comes from.[1]

Dear Staś, why do you reproach us about some gossip? Since you have been [in America], for almost 2 years, you never wrote even two words about people, so what gossip can there be? We are very much astonished and we wonder. Dear Staś, you know the whole Grudziński family. They envy us, they would drown us in a spoon of water if they could—Hipek as well as Franek and the grandmother [so probably they are the source of the gossip].[2] But perhaps our Lord God will grant us to overcome everything with His help. . . . .

Dear Staś, we embrace you innumerable times. May our Lord God help you in everything. We admonish you, save as much money as possible, in order to have a remembrance that you have been in America when you come back to our country. . . . .

A. Makowski

298 November 8 [1909]

. . . . Dear Staś: Now I shall describe to you Zygmunt's sickness. He was sick with typhoid fever for 17 days. No help could be given. Our doctors could not help. I brought a doctor from Ciechanów, and he could not help either; it only cost much money. But I wanted to save him, for he was the only support of us. Now the three little ones are left with me, and your mother upon the bed.

[1] The photograph was evidently taken at the wedding of some friend where Staś was a best man, and the best men and maids were photographed in pairs. An occasion of this kind is often the beginning of a relation between a best man and a best maid leading to a new marriage. Indeed the pairs are often matched with this in view. Hence the interest of the parents in the girl.

[2] The Grudzińskis are the family of Antoni's wife. We find here a new type of dissolution of familial ties. Up to the present we have seen only individual members losing the attitude of familial solidarity for some particular reasons. Here we find an open fight between two branches of the family, evidently made possible by the growing differentiation of town from country life.

magical background); the funeral ceremonies, with their social importance, etc.

THE FAMILY MAKOWSKI

Antoni Makowski, a shoemaker
His wife
Stanisław (Staś, Stach) } his sons
Zygmunt
Wacław (Wacuś, Wacek)
Kazio (Kaziek)
Mania (Marynka), his daughter
W. Makowski, Antoni's brother
Władek (Władysław), a cousin
Grandmother Grudzińska, the mother of Antoni's wife (probably)
Hipek } her sons
Franek

297–305, TO STANISŁAW (STAŚ) MAKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS IN POLAND

297 PRZASNYSZ, December 29, 1908

In the first words of our letter "Praised be Jesus Christus."

We received two of your letters, and we are very much satisfied, for in your first letter you wrote that you were sick and we were terribly grieved, but in your second letter you write that you are in good health, and we thank our Lord God, for this [health] is a treasure from God. . . . . We are very much pained that it is already the second Christmas eve that we divide the wafer and you are not here. We said "With whom does our Stach divide the wafer?" and we looked upon your photograph. I shed tears that you are not here, dear Stach, and we cannot divide this dear wafer with you, for we don't know whether we shall live until the next year. May God grant us to see one another as soon as possible! We divided all of us the wafer which you sent among all of us. Kaziek took a bit of it and went to your photograph and pretended to put it into your mouth, saying, "Dear Staś, bite a little of this wafer!" and we wept.[1]

[1] Kaziek expressed symbolically the idea of the spiritual participation of the absent brother in the familial festival. We see here how new symbols are created in order to keep up the spirit of the old organization in new conditions.

then in the factory and somebody else receives your letters. Moreover, somebody has turned your head and you listen to him and write foolish letters to your parents. When they received your last letter they became still more sick. So, dear Staś, forget everything and share the sorrow of your family. Now we, your uncle and aunt, send you sincere greetings. Amen.

W. Makowski

300 December 8 [1909]

. . . . We received your letter, for which we thank you. Now, when the Christmas holidays are approaching, we send you a wafer and we divide it with you and we wish you merry holidays. We wish you to have merrier holidays than we have here in our country, for we have very sad ones, because we are pained that you are not here and Zygmunt is not here and mother is very sick, so that she cannot rise, and she may not live until the holidays. Now we won't describe anything more until the next letter. I, your oldest brother Wacław, and Mania and Kazio, we three little orphans, we divide the wafer with you and wish you a Merry Christmas. And don't forget us. . . . .

Wacław Makowski

301 January 1, 1910

. . . . Dear Staś: We received your two letters, for which we thank you, for only your letters rejoice us. Your mother was awfully glad to receive this letter; she even kissed it from joy. For your mother is very sick. Dear Staś, don't grieve that you are far away in the world and have nobody except God. Your mother has been sick for more than two years, and has remained in bed for 10 weeks, and thus, dear Staś, I must worry terribly, for I have nobody. I must cook myself, for Marynka is too little yet and needs care herself. And as to the family [relatives], in happiness they are good, but in misfortune they don't even look. I don't know how I shall do now. Your mother won't live long; Mania and Wacek must be sent to school, for they have not yet learned much. But I don't know how I shall manage all this. Our Lord God has put a terrible cross upon me, and I have carried it for 3 months already. I don't work any more at all in my shop. Now I thank you for the money, for it was very useful to me. May God give you health [as reward]. And Kaziek is a pretty boy; you would not recognize him. And he is clever! [Weather.]

The deceased Zygmunt was a little angry with you for having written him thus, that he behaved badly. Somebody must have informed you falsely, for he was interested in nothing except work and church. He had improved himself for two years and passed the examination in the school. Your father has wept a long time for you, but there remains the hope that at least we receive sometimes a letter from you; this is our whole joy. But from Zygmunt we shall never more receive anything. Before dying, he bade us all farewell, and you also, dear Staś. He asked you not to be angry with him. He had a very nice funeral. There were as many people as on All Saints Day, even many Jews. Four garlands were carried before the coffin, which were made for him in the town, and we received two telegrams, one from Płock, from the priest Królikowski, and one from his companion. I cannot write any more about Zygmunt's funeral, for our heart bursts open with sorrow. . . . .

Dear Staś, you may be exempted [from military service], because Zygmunt is dead, and these others are small. Your father hopes you will come home perhaps. We have nothing more to write. We hope that you will share our sorrow. Now we all greet you. Answer us as soon as possible. As to Władek [cousin], don't answer him at all; why should you have this trouble with him? When Zygmunt was sick he did not even drop in once. . . . .

[Your father]

ANTONI MAKOWSKI

299 November 15, 1909

. . . . DEAR STACH: First I inform you about the sad situation of your parents. Zygmunt is dead, on November 2, after terrible sufferings, for he was terribly ill for 3 weeks and did not speak a word for 2 weeks. I have lived 40 years and I have never seen a man so desperately sick as he was. Your parents did not undress for 17 nights for they both had to sit with him, because he always tried to run away, and beat himself so that his arms and legs were all bruised. And now I write you news which is much sadder still. Your mother fell sick at once after the death of the late Zygmunt and is now severely sick, so that the priest was there with our Lord God [sacrament], and she will soon follow her son. And as to their material situation, they have exhausted whatever they had. Your father walks like a shadow from grief. And you ask why do they not answer you. But perhaps you don't receive our letters; perhaps you are

we must think about ourselves. But nothing can be done. God's will! Your mother was not sick with consumption, but with chronic lung catarrh, so the doctors said. It is only your "dear" grandmother who gossiped that your mother was sick with consumption. She told it everywhere in Przasnysz and even wrote it to America. Such is our dear family!

Now, dear Staś, I shall describe to you our incident—what the Lord God can do! When Zygmunt died, our deceased mother wept terribly, lay down at once and died from this sorrow. On the third day after your mother's funeral Wacuś fell sick with typhoid and had 41° [Centigrade] of fever. What could we do? Marynka and Kazio with tears prayed to God's Mother and devoted him to God's Mother and asked God's Mother for his health, promising that when he recovered, he would go to Częstochowa. The fever disappeared at once. It was at 3 in the afternoon, and at 4 the fever had already yielded. The doctor could not believe that he was better. He was weak after this, but for the last two weeks he has walked and now, thanks to God, he is already going to school and is perfectly healthy.[1]

Dear Staś, I should advise you that it would be better if this Miss Szczepańska went to you. You know her very well, so perhaps she would be good for you. Now she is in Warsaw, and even got a little instructed. As to Miss Drewniacka, I cannot tell you anything, for it could spread about [gossip], only I write you that she wrote a letter to one boy here in the town asking him to come [and marry her].[2]

ANTONI MAKOWSKI

304 April 7, 1910

. . . . I thank you heartily for your letters, for only your letters rejoice me. I should like to have a letter from you every day, but it is impossible. Now, dear Staś, I write you about our holidays. We had very sad holidays, so that I cannot even describe them to you. Nobody from our family calls upon us and nobody helps us. As long

[1] Cases like this one are related by the thousands, not only among peasants, but among intelligent classes. The vow of a pilgrimage to Częstochowa is considered particularly effective.

[2] The fact would be considered reprehensible in two respects, (1) as proving that the girl is not really attached to Staś, since not long before becoming engaged to him she wrote to another, and thus she wants to marry just anybody; (2) as proving that she lacks self-appreciation, since she makes advances.

Your mother cannot write any more, so she tells me to write you thus: She kisses you with her whole heart and her whole soul, and wishes you every good, whatever you want from God, and success in your intention. "And [she says] I wish you to be my true child, good and religious. And may we see each other in Heaven. And don't forget about your father and these little orphans. And now I bless you in this far world, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen! And now I bless also my dear brother-in-law. Don't abandon my Stach! And I bless you, my sister, and your children; may God bless you! And also my brother [cousin] G."

Only don't grieve, only don't grieve; perhaps our Lord God will still grant health to your mother. Now we greet you, I your father, wish you a good New Year, and Wacław, and Mania, and Kazio.

ANTONI MAKOWSKI

302 January 14, 1910

DEAR STAŚ: We send you sad news, for we have already buried your mother. A great sorrow reigns over us after the loss of our dearest [wife and] mother and the dear Zygmunt. We have gone through two funerals in so short a time. The funeral was very beautiful, for there were 4 priests. The priests did not cost me very much. And there were many people. Yes, dear Staś, I am totally ruined. Your mother has been sick for more than two years, and the doctors cost, and I could not work, and now I cannot work either, because a terrible sorrow overcomes me for your mother and Zygmunt and you, dear Staś. Now I don't know what to do. If I knew that in America I should be able to educate these three orphans I would go to America. So I beg you, answer me and advise me how to manage all this. Yes, dear Staś, don't grieve, only pray our Lord Jesus for health and don't forget about us and don't be angry with us for writing you so often. Now we greet you, I, your father, kiss you heartily, and Wacław, and Marynka, and Kazio.

ANTONI MAKOWSKI

303 February 15, 1910

DEAR STAŚ: . . . . I thank you heartily for your letter, because only your letter can rejoice us. We cannot cease to long for our beloved Zygmunt and our dear mother who loved us so. And now

CUGOWSKI SERIES

The author of these letters, Józef Cugowski, is a skilled workman of peasant origin and has evidently some general instruction. His letters are in rather good Polish. He has kept almost all the traditional peasant attitudes, only more individual, conscious, and equilibrated.

After his father's death he assumes immediately, as the oldest brother, the rôle of head of the family, and if he still seems to recognize that his brothers have an equal right of decision and asks for their advice, it is partly a formality, partly a desire to keep harmony, partly, finally, the lack of personal interest in any possible economic arrangement about the fortune left. This lack of personal interest shows that for him the rôle of head of the family is nothing but a social function imposed by circumstances and resulting from the familial unity. But there is one point in which his attitude differs slightly from the average peasant's—he goes further in his patriarchal attitude than is normal in the country by practically excluding from the family-group all the members who do not bear the same name, i.e., married sisters and brothers-in-law. In this respect his (otherwise justified) treatment of Graj, his contemptuous attitude toward Margas, his (probably willing) limitation of the subscription to their parents' monument, are very significant. He goes so far as practically to consider his stepmother and his sisters-in-law more as real members of the family than he does his own sisters. Now, there is of course some superiority of masculine over feminine relationship among the peasants, but not to such an extent; there are localities where no such superiority seems to be acknowledged at all. As to the question of keeping the father's

as everything was whole [clothes, etc.] it was only half as bad, but now I don't know what way to turn. You wrote me to take some woman, but it is not worth while, for I must give her a room and pay her, and the children won't have any benefit. Probably I shall be obliged to marry. Up to the present I see nothing convenient. And the shoemaker's work is bad, there is no earning at all. I don't know how it will be. All the men are going to America. . . . . Now our priest from Przasnysz is going to Częstochowa, and I have devoted Wacek [made a vow in his name that he would go]. But I don't know how to send him alone, and then it will cost about 15 roubles. . . . .

A. Makowski

305 June 21, 1911

. . . . Dear Staś: I won't describe to you my success; you know yourself very well how I succeed. You write in your letter that when Wacek and Mania grow up it will be very well with me.[1]

And now, dear Staś, I called upon Mrs. Drewniacka on the same day when I received the letter, and Mrs. D., had also received a letter from Mania [her daughter]. So we talked it over and I went to the priest and took both birth-certificates, which I send you.[2] Why did you not write, when your wedding will be? I would have gone to your wedding, while now I won't go. It is very painful to me not to be at the wedding of my first son. And now describe to me, how the wedding was and who was at it. . . . . Send me your wedding photograph. Dear son, I send you my blessing, may Lord God bless you and God's Mother and St. Józef. I wish you every good [etc.]. In the name of the Father [etc.]. Now I cannot write any more for regret contracted my heart,[3] only I greet you and my dear daughter-in-law.

Your loving father,
Antoni Makowski

[1] Evidently an unfinished reproach. The father is offered small comfort. The son should have promised to come back, and the following paragraph seems to indicate that he had formerly promised to take his father to America.

[2] The son marries precisely the girl whom the father sought to dissuade him from marrying, and the father complies with the fact without protest.

[3] The letter is one of the best expressions in our collection of paternal resignation and affection in the face of the repudiation by the child of the familial ties. Usually in such cases the father rebukes, threatens, preaches, or curses.

Wikcia, Frania, Anusia — his daughters
Ewcia (Ewa), Józef's second wife
Marya P. (Marynia), Józef's third wife
Romuś, Micio, Henio — Józef's sons (by his second wife)
Genia (Geniusia), Bogunia, Irenka, Stasia — Józef's daughters (by his second wife)
Michasia, Teoś' wife
Lucia, Staś's wife
Graj, Wikcia's husband
Ludwik, Frania's husband
Margas, Anusia's husband

306–18, FROM JÓZEF CUGOWSKI, IN POLAND, TO HIS BROTHER STANISŁAW (STAŚ), IN AMERICA

306 OSTROWIEC, July 25, 1907

"Praised be Jesus Christus!"

DEAR LUCIA AND STAŚ: With a great impatience we awaited the news from you, whether God had led you happily to the place of your destination. But glory be to God for having kept you happy and in health, in spite of great difficulties and dangers. Thanks be to him for it for eternal times. I received your letter two weeks ago, and I answer only today because of different circumstances about which I shall inform you at least partly in this letter.

First, I inform you about a very sad thing concerning our dear father, that he bade us farewell forever. Tired with his life's work, the old man moved to a better land, into eternity. [It happened] soon after your departure, no more than a week, for he died on May 25. I intended to leave the next day, as we had decided, when I received suddenly a telegram asking me to come for the funeral. So we both went and Genia with us. Teoś was also there, but alone. The funeral was very beautiful. The priest came home for the body and accompanied it to the cemetery, because Teoś and I attended to everything ourselves. I don't know how it would have been otherwise, how our good and sentimental [irony] brother-in-law Graj

farm—it is evidently Graj who is nearer to the peasant tradition than Cugowski. Since no son can take the whole farm because all the sons have other occupations, according to the peasant's ideas it should be taken by a son-in-law rather than be divided. But Cugowski wants the farm to remain in the hands of some male member of the family, and since this cannot be done he no longer cares for its integrity.

In religious matters Cugowski keeps most of the characteristic features of the actually dominant moral-religious system, particularly the rich formalism and the lack of really mystical or eschatological interests. But religiousness is already much more individualized and internal. Except the mention of the crime in Jasna Góra (Częstochowa), we find nothing in his letters concerning churches, ceremonies, meetings, etc. Thus, we can consider his religion as intermediary between the moral and the mystical system. The same may be said of his attitude toward death; still to some extent socially determined, it leaves much more place for individual sorrow.

One of his features is typically peasant—the pomposity of style so usual in all the peasants who rise intellectually above the average level. In this particular case there is hardly any showing off. We have rather the impression (which all the peasant speeches leave) that the man simply enjoys his own ability of "fine" talking or writing. It must be remembered also that a letter ought to be the best literary work of which the writer is capable.

THE FAMILY CUGOWSKI

Cugowski, a farmer	
His second wife	
Józef, a skilled workman	his sons
Teoś, a merchant	his sons
Staś (Stanisław)	his sons
Piotr	his sons

that he has your authorization. But we don't believe that you could have resigned in his favor, particularly in writing. I don't expect it to be possible, knowing his mean intentions with regard to us all. [Work; condition of the country.]

JÓZEF

307 September 7, 1907

. . . . DEAR SISTER-IN-LAW AND BROTHER: We received your letter on Thursday . . . . for which we thank you very much. We waited for some news from you, but alas! such a large space divides us that no news can come rapidly from the other hemisphere of the earth. But glory be to God that you are both in good health, and that you, my Staś, have some work and can earn for your living and that of your wife. I hope that later on you will get better and more profitable work . . . . and then you can live better than in our native country. You know how it was when you were leaving, and now things don't seem to get better but rather worse. The trade and industry are stopping, particularly now when winter approaches. Our factory goes on very badly . . . . and you know, my dear ones, that there is a numerous family to nourish, so there is enough to think of when one cannot earn. And what is the worst, there is no place to go, for in the whole country it is the same, in some localities still worse. Food has become much dearer . . . . everything costs about ⅓ more than before. It is because in many localities hail has beaten the crops, in other localities they have rotted, in Russia and Lithuania there were strikes in many manors, and the crops were left in the field. Moreover fires, incendiary and from lightning, have also destroyed much bread. In a word, our Lord God took the bread away and begins to punish these beastlike elements which now don't acknowledge their Creator as their Lord above them, but in the most horrible way blaspheme against Him and against everything which is holy, i.e., the faith and His commands.[1]

Dear Staś, you ask me now for the second time to get from Barański your 40 roubles. So I shall describe to you now his present situation. When he came back he got sick and stayed for some weeks in bed. I was just then in their house, but they begged me

[1] A good expression of the peasant's hate of revolutionary ideas, not counterbalanced in this case by any reflection on the probable bearing of these ideas upon the condition of the lower classes or upon the national Polish life.

would have arranged it, for he even refused, or rather did not wish to send a telegram for me and Teoś, but busied himself with everything until the priest and the neighbors forced him. He wished to push his work to the end, but he did not succeed at all. What is worse for him, he has become now in our eyes and conviction our worst enemy forever. When we came everything was ready, i.e., the funeral agreed upon, the coffin bought. But God have pity, what a coffin! First too narrow, but, what is the most important, about 6 inches too short. But it cost only 17 złoty [2 roubles, 55 copecks], so you can imagine what can be had for that money. As soon as I came I ordered at once another made and I took upon myself the decision of everything until Teoś came. Graj was very much dissatisfied and spoke very little with me. But that is not yet the end. After the funeral it was necessary to decide about what was left, of course, with our whole family present, that is, I, Teoś, Graj with Wikcia, Ludwik with Frania, Anusia, mother and Piotr. It was to be divided into equal parts, but as father said while alive that it was to go to one of you two, I don't oppose the will of our father, but respect it and resign my poor part for the benefit of you or Teoś. But as you were not present, I gave it in your name to Teoś. Frania with her husband and Anusia did the same. Only he [Graj] did not want to agree to anything; he wanted to be the farmer after our father's death, to give a few roubles to mother and to drive her out upon the road. But it cannot be and won't be so. I proposed to give him, as remuneration for the pains which he took for our father, one meadow, half of the harvest for this year, one part of the turf and the wood which lies near the house. But he refused to accept it. Then he got a few roubles in cash and such a dismissal that he went home without even bidding us goodbye. After this I called two farmers . . . . and wrote an authorization in favor of our mother, that she was to live in the house until her death, harvest everything, pay the taxes and keep the house in order, with the help and advice of these two farmers. They bound themselves by their own signature that they won't permit anybody to take anything, except Teoś in the future and our mother at present. In case of violence, these two have the right to call on others for help and to prevent positively any abuse.

Now, my Staś, he begins to protest furiously that as the oldest son-in-law he has the right to sell the farm at auction, and he says

me more or less her farming, and writes about Graj, that he took all the clothes of our late father. But no matter; he can take nothing [valuable]. In a few words I shall describe it to you. He wrote a long letter to Teoś, with claims to everything which is left. . . . . He intended to have it sold at auction, and even asked a lawyer's advice. He wished by all means to triumph and to have the upper hand, but he was deceived. Teoś sent me his letter, which he probably did not expect. And of course I gave him a suitable answer, for he slandered me as well as my wife. . . . .

JÓZEF

309 March 25, 1908

Wednesday, Day of the Annunciation of the Holiest Virgin Mary. "Praised be Jesus Christus."

MY DEAR AND BELOVED L[UCIA] AND S[TAŚ] BOTH TOGETHER: [A page about work in America and in Poland.] Dear Staś, I got our last payment from the factory [insurance money, paid out when the workman leaves the factory, becomes unable to work or dies] and I put it into the bank. You will have, as last help, a few hundred roubles secure. And perhaps our Lord God will bless you in your work and your intentions, and you will earn some more money and increase your capital. May God grant it!

Here is misery, as before; nothing has changed. If we work for a week we stop for another or two. And what proscriptions they [the factory-owners] invent! It is awful. But what can we do, since in the whole empire the conditions are the same. And robberies and attacks are the order of the day, although we have a state of war. We don't know when it will be abolished and some rights given to the nation. From our factory many people have been dismissed, the big mill has stood still for some months. . . . .

Now, my Staś, I shall mention something about Graj. He complains awfully to you about me and Ewcia [writer's wife], saying that we have wronged him, that I have abused him in my letter and Ewcia has told him the truth. He says about me that Piotr instigated me, and therefore I acted and decided thus. But I shall tell you only this, that I have acted according to my own reason and conviction; I am not a child that anybody can instigate and persuade to do something which does not agree with the truth and my conscience and my own opinion, for I have my own reason already. If he says

in the name of everything [and said] that when he was better and began to work somewhere he would try to get money and would give it back. But what happened? A few days later he came to health again, and went in search of work in the direction of the frontier, to Zawiercie. And what did this scoundrel do? A few steps from the railway-station he cut his throat and stabbed himself three times. When people noticed him, he gave few signs of life. They took him . . . . to the hospital . . . . and sent her a telegram asking her to come. I don't know whether he is still alive, and even if he recovers, criminal responsibility awaits him, the scoundrel, for suicide.[1] And thus, my dear ones, your 40 roubles are to be considered lost. In their home is misery, some children, and not a penny put aside. . . . . And you must know, dear Staś, that you are not the only one who is the victim of this cheater. He had borrowed money from many people when coming back from America, and even more than from you. Who is to be made responsible for this money, while this woman and her children ought rather to have some help? You remember probably how I advised you to be careful, for you did not know him, and now my prophecy is almost fulfilled. . . . .

From our mother we have had no news for some weeks. I don't know how Graj treats her there. But it seems to me that he won't get anything by his avarice and wrath. . . . .

Dear brother, I inform you about one thing more. I don't know whether you will both agree. We decided, Teoś and I, to erect a monument to our dear parents. It would cost about 150 roubles, and the local priest would take charge of the matter, for it was he who gave this idea, a very good one. So if you wish to contribute, it would be a monument from the sons, for our sisters refused to take part in it; only the sons with their wives. . . . .

JÓZEF

308 December 29, 1907

DEAR SISTER-IN-LAW AND BROTHER: [Expression of familial affection; New Year wishes; news about work and factory.] I received a letter from our mother a few days ago. She describes to

[1] Technically correct as to the possibility of prosecution, but a more unreserved and self-righteous condemnation of suicide than is usual among peasants. As shown by popular tales and songs the attitude is by no means uniform, but, as in the higher classes, varies with the motive of the suicide, the character of the person, and the social consequences of the act.

monthly, but nothing can be done, I must comply with it. May God only grant her to recover.[1] I cannot determine today how long she will be there, for it has been only a week and a half. The doctor, after examining her, gave me this comforting hope, that she can recover, but not soon, at least in two months. May God the Omnipotent grant it, for I am unhappy with these small children in such a time as now. Believe me, my dear ones, I cannot keep my ideas together in view of the burden which overwhelms me. I try to get along with these children as well as I can, for it would be impossible to hire anybody. I must hire only for washing, and the rest Genia manages alone, according to my directions. You waited for a letter from me, but I was unable to write even a few words. When I came back from the factory, instead of resting I had to try to give some food to this poor sick woman. But could I do it as it ought to be done? And can one get everything always, even for money?

Yes, dear Lucia and Staś, my destiny strikes me hard, particularly as in the present time, which is so bad, I ought to be thinking about economizing as much as possible, and here, on the contrary, I must take the money which I have put aside in order to save health. But if God gives health, we must live in some way. Meanwhile may Thy will be done, my Lord!

It was at the end of May in Petersburg, I took Romuś [son] to Teoś, that he might learn business and help them. I have received already two letters from them and one from Romuś. He is very much pleased and he understands everything well. Perhaps God will grant him to have a piece of bread in this way in the future. He has not much instruction, but Teoś also has little and he manages

[1] From a man in Cugowski's position the sacrifice is great, for it probably means a sacrifice of his whole fortune. A peasant farmer would hardly do this. But it would be a mistake to explain it merely by a stronger affection. Cugowski's affection is probably not much stronger than that of an average peasant, particularly as it is his second wife and as half a year after her death he marries for the third time and seems to be happy again. There is certainly another reason for sacrificing more than a peasant would; he is a hired workman, his whole life is organized upon the basis of salary, and property has for him only the secondary value of a resource in the case of extraordinary expenses; its influence upon his social standing is also very slight. For the peasant, on the contrary, property means a basis, not only of economic life, but of the whole individual and social life. Farm-work is his main interest, land is the essential condition of his social standing in the community. Therefore for a peasant a sacrifice, economically equal to that of Cugowski would be subjectively incomparably greater, almost impossible.

that through our fault he got too little, well, I shall try to add some [money] more, that he may have enough and may not complain about me or my wife. And I will mention, or rather remind him, what he got and what we got. And I will ask him also who has more rights, whether he, as the oldest son-in-law, or I, as the oldest son. And if I made such a decision, it was not for my own benefit, but for the benefit of you and Teoś. This is the first point. And the second point is that all this [the farm] ought to remain in totality, as the only remembrance of our parents in our native country. He thought probably that he would inherit all this and would manage it alone, but it cannot be by any means and will not be. [Easter wishes.]

JÓZEF

310 July 12, 1908

. . . . MY DEAR AND BELOVED L[UCIA] AND STAŚ: I received your letter. . . . . Don't be angry with me for not having written to you, but I was sure that you would do as hundreds and thousands of people do who come back in throngs, cold and hungry. But since your condition is not so bad, and moreover you are both in good health, we are very glad, and thanks be for it to God the Highest. It would not be a crime if you should come back, but you know how it is now in our country, and so you are right in not moving. [Describes the economic and political conditions of the country, lack of work, murders.]

Now I inform you, my dear ones, about our success and health at home. I and my children are now healthy, thanks to God, but with Ewcia things are very bad. For a long time she had been weak, she walked and did what she could. But almost since Christmas she has been worse and worse, to such an extent that on Easter there was nobody to make anything [any Easter food]. I don't care for myself, but the children had almost nothing, and I have a heavy sorrow, for she was lying sick during the whole holidays, so weak that she could not come up these few steps. I asked factory and private doctors, but it did not help at all, for it is a lung disease which requires a special cure. So a private doctor, after examination, decided that she must go abroad. So I had to do it, in order to save the health of the mother of the family which God gave us. Well, without much hesitating I took my wife to Zakopane and placed her in a sanatorium there. The cost is enormous, for it will cost almost 150 roubles

come back. I don't know what I shall do alone with these small children. . . . . But Thy will be done, O Lord! [Crops; weather; bad condition of the country.]

JÓZEF

312 January 6, 1909

Day of the Three Kings ✝ G[aspar] ✝ M[elchior] ✝ B[althazar][1]

"Praised be Jesus Christus."

DEAR AND BELOVED LUCIA AND STAŚ: [Two pages about the factory in which he is working and the conditions of the work.] Now I shall describe to you, my dear ones, our present sorrow, which harasses me terribly. Ewcia has been severely sick for the last three weeks, and so feeble that she cannot rise, while there is unhappily nobody to do anything for this poor sick woman and give her even any food. Genia goes to school, and even if she did not, she is still a child and what can be asked from her? I took a maid, but God pity us! She is quite incapable of doing anything. And I go to the factory for the whole day, so you can imagine what care this poor sick woman has. My health is also beginning to be ruined. Four weeks ago I got a spineache which plagued me so much in the beginning that I had to lie down and remained ten days in bed; I was unable to move my hand or foot, and the pain was terrible. Even today I am not quite well, but I cannot remain in bed, I must walk as well as I can, for my duties oblige me to do it. My sickness also has contributed to some extent to make my wife's health worse. And so she is grieved because of my sickness, and I am grieved a hundred fold more by her sickness, for mine can pass with time, while God alone knows how long hers will last. . . . . To complete all this, I received a letter from Teoś before Christmas [informing me] that Michasia [his wife] was dangerously ill with typhoid fever. The letter was full of such a terrible sorrow that we wept over their lot, although ours is not better in this respect. And, so my dear Lucia and Staś, I announce sad news to you. You have wished us a Merry Christmas, but we have spent it almost in tears, particularly I, for there is nobody to do anything. I don't care about myself, but about my children. And so from all sides sorrow and grief harass the man in this poor life, and there is no better hope in any respect. . . . .

JÓZEF and EWA with THEIR FAMILY

[1] These three letters are written on January 6, with consecrated chalk, upon the door of every house, and are not to be erased until the following year.

a rather big business. Romuś has finished two classes, and if he is willing he can learn there, for it is easier than in our town. Teoś and his wife don't look well, although they have enough to eat and don't lack money. But they don't lack work and trouble either. They keep ten men, so there is enough to think about. Three good shops and a bakery are upon his head. There is income, but also enormous expenses. I advised them to take a smaller business and to manage it alone, then it would be easier. But they say that everything would be well were it not for those people who don't pay their debts. . . . . I have sent long ago the money for our father's monument, but I have no news yet whether it is ready. . . . . Genia learns very well; she got prizes last year and this year. She passed to the 3d division. . . . .

JÓZEF

311 BOLESŁAWÓW, September 7, 1908

DEAR AND BELOVED LUCIA AND STAŚ: . . . . I am a little comforted in hearing that after so long a time you got some work and you will be able to earn at least for a modest living. . . . . At least you made your wife free from that heavy work. This is your great luck, granted by God, that health favors both of you in these troubles about material existence, for otherwise it would be bad in that distant and foreign country. You write yourself, my Staś, that it is not well to be sick there, because the doctors' treatment is bad. The same usually happens here, with a few exceptions. Whoever has money, has everything, and whoever is poor, the wind always blows into his eyes [Proverb]. And it is no news that the working-class is ill-favored today, not only there but upon the whole earth-sphere.

As I have written you in the last letter, I think, Ewcia is sick. Up to the present she remains in bed, not even at home, but abroad, in Zakopane. . . . . But thanks to God, she feels much better, and perhaps God the Almighty will grant her to recover, although it costs us very much. More than two months have passed since she went there, and I manage to get on alone, as well as I can with my children. . . . . If I could earn more! But work is so bad, that I earn scarcely enough to keep the house, and God sent Ewcia the sickness, for which I spend the rest of the old supplies. I really don't know what will happen when everything is spent, and if health does not

nobody has ever recovered from consumption, and poor Ewcia was sick with this terrible disease. Now, after her death and funeral I had to sell, almost for nothing, her bedding and many other things which she used, and I don't know what to do with the things which are left. It is easy to waste them, while they cost a considerable sum of money. And I have no near friends with me who would give me salutary good advice. Everything has fallen upon my head, troubled with a heavy sorrow. You can agree yourselves, my dear ones, that my present situation is painful above any expression. But Thy will be done, O Lord! I must carry this heavy cross which you have put upon me, O Lord! Give me only strength and patience in order not to fall under its weight!

My dear ones, I should have much to write you still, but excuse me, for even in penning these few words my heart is cut with sorrow, and I write almost without ideas, they have become so entangled. Three weeks have passed today since she left us, i.e., on February 7, at 10 o'clock in the evening, and still I cannot come to myself and I don't know what will be further. I only pray God to give me health in order to earn bread for these poor orphans, and to educate them that they may find their way in life. For myself I don't foresee any happiness upon this miserable world, for I have experienced none up to the present. In less than 17 years I have buried two wives, and in such conditions one may become weary of his life. . . . .

JÓZEF

314 April 2, 1909

. . . . MY BELOVED LUCIA AND STAŚ: . . . . You probably received my letter with the sad news, what a severe blow befell me. The second month since the death of my dear Ewcia will be ended soon, and still I cannot adjust myself to this reality. I feel so lonely. Every object reminds me vividly how great a lack is felt at every step when one has no wife, mother and housekeeper. Still more I feel it now, when the solemn holidays of Easter are approaching. Everybody rejoices, even if he is in misery, on this joyful day, while I, unhappy man, experience for the second time such an awful pain of heart, particularly today, being burdened with so numerous a family and in the critical times which have prevailed in our country during the last few years. But nothing can be done, such is evidently my

313 February 28, 1909

. . . . Dearest Lucia and Staś: . . . . I announce to you, my dear ones, a very sad news, a terrible blow that befell me a few weeks ago. Even today I don't know how to describe it to you, because of my heavy sorrow and terrible grief.

As I told you in my last letter, we both were sick, Ewcia and I. Today I am in good health, thanks to God, for my sickness was transitory and through care my pains have disappeared. . . . . But my dear poor Ewcia bade us farewell forever, leaving these little children orphans and me in a heavy sorrow with them. I don't know how to describe to you, my dear ones, what a terrible woe and despair are tossing me. I don't know how to define this terrible blow; I almost lose my senses. After such care on my part, after such enormous expenses, it was impossible to save her by any means from that terrible disease, until it ended with death amid horrible sufferings. She was conscious almost till the last moment, and begged us in the name of everything that is sacred to help her, poor martyr. You can imagine, my dear ones, what was going on within me when my children's mother and my wife implored for help and I could not help her. My heart almost burst open with grief in looking at a dear person whose life was going out forever before my eyes, and who had a right to live, who was very necessary in this world to bring up her children who were so small. You have no idea what a torture it is for the dying person when she is conscious. I cannot describe it and nobody can relate it. But I had no less to suffer in looking at such an agony. For if an old person dies one can more easily comply with it, while my poor Ewcia was still a young woman; she had lived scarcely 36 years, she was in the fulness of life, and she had to die. I was glad when she came back from abroad in September. She looked so well, and she was so full of joy that she had got her health back. But our rejoicing did not last. After a few weeks she began to get worse, and so rapidly that there was no help. Every day she was worse; you could almost see her fade away. I brought doctors again . . . . but it did not help at all. Three weeks before Christmas she lay down and did not rise again. . . . . Sad is my lot, for I am today in such a situation, that I have neither money nor wife, nor, what is the most important, a mother for my children. You must know my dear ones, that the 3 months abroad cost more than 500 roubles and, counting other expenses, I suffered an awful loss. And all this was in vain, for

others off, because there are 8 parts. . . . . You know, my dear ones, that Teoś and I have enough of our own troubles, and I don't want to occupy myself with something which has little material importance for me. And again, to give it to some fool like Graj or to some Margas that he may get the whole benefit is not suitable and I don't think of it. We have resolved that our stepmother shall stay there until her death and shall care for everything, but they don't like it and Graj wants to have the upper hand and to drive her away; but without our permission he can do nothing. . . . . Perhaps our Lord will grant us to meet this year at the consecration of our parent's monument; then we could settle this matter. . . . . I beg you, dear Staś, after receiving this letter write at once to Teoś and me. . . . .

JÓZEF

315 December 12, 1909

"L[audetur] J[esus] Chr[istus]."

DEAR LUCIA AND STAŚ: After so long an interruption I bring it about to write you something about myself, and during so long a time much material of different content has gathered. [Letter and photograph received.]

I inform you first, that I have entered for the third time into the conjugal bond. My wedding was performed on October 31, in the parish Wojciechowice. . . . . My wife's maiden name is Marya P. She is a young person only 26. She is of the size of the deceased, but her character is mild beyond expression, so that in a few days she knew so well how to gain the love of the children, particularly of the little Stasia, that the latter begins to cry aloud at the mention of her leaving. In a word, I thank God and the Holiest Mother for their holy providence. I can say boldly and from my heart that further my life will be lighter and happier, for I have suffered very much in my life, particularly during the last times. I am unable to describe what an enormous burden oppressed my shoulders. But God the Almighty in his Providence deigned to comfort me. It is true that only a few weeks have passed since our wedding, but I am confident that the future will be most certainly light, for such a noble character as that with which my beloved Marynia is endowed can never change. I at least will give not the slightest reason for it but will endeavor by all means to reward her sacrifice, for it is indeed not a small sacrifice,

destiny from God, to bear only heavy crosses and sorrow and toilsome labor. In a word, it is not granted to me to share bright and pleasant days, but only thick clouds overshadow the horizon of my life and send sometimes strong lightnings which shatter almost totally the remnants of hope of my wretched life in this valley of tears. And I can say truly "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." But Thy will be done, O Lord! And although I am so tormented with different kinds of afflictions, still I don't lose hope in the mercy of the Highest, that He will deign to comfort me at least for the short time of my shattered life. And conscious of the duties which I have, I invigorate myself with this hope and say, after the Lord's Psalmist: "Sursum Corda."

Dear Staś, I inform you moreover that besides the sorrow which I bear one thing still harasses us, i.e., this miserable fortune which was left after the death of our parents. As you know, my Staś, Graj was the mainspring in trying to manage so that it might not get into your hands or those of Teoś, that it might not be willed to any of you by a notarial act during our father's life. And thus it happened. So now Graj gives Teoś no rest, but "dries his head" [annoys him by asking] continually that a division may be made, or that Teoś will give him the power to be a trustee of it. But I cannot agree to it in any way. He does not write to me, for he is afraid because I have abused him much, once during our dear father's funeral, and then for the second time in my letter. So he corresponds now only with Teoś and gives him no rest but wants to benefit from it himself and to drive our stepmother away. But he does not succeed, for I know about everything because Teoś sends me all his letters; he does not suspect it probably. He tries to persuade Anusia's husband also, a man named Margas, to cede him their claims, and proposes to let this Margas live in this house. This Margas wrote already to me and to Teoś that a part is due to him also. But I don't know him and don't wish to have this pleasure. And so, my Staś, think about it well, how to act. If you want to keep this farm, I as well as Teoś, will give you a written document that we resign our claims in favor of you, and you may then make some plan with it, that it may remain with you and that in the future our name at least will be there. To tell the truth, it is not a resting-place for us even in the future, for I suppose that it will end by being equally divided, and then each member of the family will get perhaps 60 roubles or even less, and it will not profit one member to pay all the

317 August 5, 1911

. . . . Beloved Lucia and Staś: I beg your pardon for not having given you any news. . . . . It is not a big thing to write a few words and it does not take much time, only the most important part is played here by a thought free [of care], while I have very little of it, for trouble and sorrow have been my continual companions since long ago. Our Lord God does not spare me His crosses in this miserable valley of sorrow. And so, beginning with the sickness and death of my wife Ewcia, a year later [came] the death of my beloved and always regretted daughter Geniusia. She was extinguished like a light while still like a blossoming bud of a pure lily. The sorrow of my heart after the loss of these dear beings is not yet calmed, the wound of the heart is not yet healed, and already a new blow begins to wound my heart, for even if I do not wish it, I must tell you the sad news in order to relieve myself a little at least. Well, it is so, my dear ones. Henio [son] has been sickly for a long time, but now for a few months he has been seriously sick. I don't wish to believe it, but it proves that he has the same symptoms of disease as Ewcia and Geniusia had. Neither medicine nor strengthening food is of any help; he is weaker and weaker, he looks worse and worse, until at last he will end with this sad death.

And so, my beloved Lucia and Staś, this is more or less the first side of the medal of my present life, concerning the feelings of my heart and the moral side. And now as to the material side, I cannot say that it is painted with bright colors. [Work; factory conditions.]

Dear L. and S., inform me what is the news with you. . . . . From Teoś I have had no news lately. They succeed rather well, but health favors neither of them. Romuś and Micio are with them. Romuś has been there for more than three years, and I took Micio last October. Romuś is already a rather good salesman. As to Bogunia, she has finished three divisions [of the village school] and we don't know what to do with her now. Irenka passed into the second division. She does not learn well, but she is healthy and strong. Stasia is also in good health, only my poor dear Henio is very weak and it will clearly be difficult for him to recover. But may God grant it, for I am very sorry for him.

Now I shall mention in short our actual common life. Thanks to God, I cannot complain about my wife. She complies with everything as well as she can, not badly. Well, and the fruit of our love

and I shall know how to appreciate it duly after so many troubles and such a heavy sorrow. But I won't describe it in detail; perhaps God will grant us to see one another and then you will get acquainted with my chosen little wife. Meanwhile . . . . we send you our wedding photograph. I dont know whether you will like her in the photograph, although I may say that she is well [pretty] enough.[1] But I inform you at the same time of news sad beyond expression. Genia has been dangerously and severely ill for some weeks, and this grieves us much. May God give her recovery, for it is really a pity. Such a good child. . . . .

MARYA and JÓZEF

316 October 15, 1910

. . . . MY BELOVED LUCIA AND STAŚ: First I inform you, my dear ones, about the very sad accident which happened in that miraculous place, Jasna Gora [Częstochowa], through this scoundrel and murderer, the Paulinist Damazy Macoch, and his mates. They disgraced the miraculous image of the Holiest Mother and robbed it of jewels and costly adornments. Moreover, they have long passed their time in the cloister-cells in revelry, and this year in July they committed a murder in this holy place. It is impossible to describe what a feeling of oppression prevailed in the country. . . . . But thanks to God, the main criminal and his associates have been caught, and justice will measure a merited punishment to them. [News about work, factory, weather.]

Dear Staś, there is the question of this miserable property left by our deceased parents. As you know, it is not willed to anybody, but must be divided into equal parts. Teoś wrote to me asking me to arrange it, but no other arrangement can be made except an equal division. So we came to an understanding with Teoś and it is decided thus, for you must agree yourself that such a situation cannot last long; everything gets wasted, and there is no proprietor to repair. . . . . Write me your opinion. . . . .

MARYA and JÓZEF with THEIR FAMILY

[1] Here the man's conjugal attitude is completely individualized. Although the marriage was probably contracted partly for economic reasons, partly with regard to the children, Cugowski, whose individual feelings are more developed than in the average peasant and less subordinated to the familial attitudes, introduces a sentimental element into his conjugal relations, which is usually lacking even in first marriages of peasants.

hope, while this [being] implores to be saved. My beloved children, how they longed for life! My dear Geniusia mentioned you often, saying that, when you came back she would already be grown up. But when the poor child was sick in bed, she said herself: "I shan't see auntie or uncle any more." And how she wished to see Teoś! In the same way my beloved Henio asked more than once: "Please, father, when will uncle come back from America, for I should like so much to see him." But alas! too large a space divides us, we could not even dream about it. Let us rather leave these sad questions in peace, for tears overflow the eyes and the heart almost bursts open with heavy grief. My dear ones, as to this money of yours, it is sent and probably you will receive it sooner than this letter. I had some trouble with it, for you did not send me any authorization, and I had to show your letter as a proof that you had asked it sent. They did it only for me, out of politeness, because they know me. . . . . This is how your capital stands: I have sent 375 roubles, the sending cost 3 roubles, 94 copecks, 20 roubles are left as your share, which you can receive only after New Year. You have also 20 roubles with me, and as I wrote you, the monument upon the grave of our parents cost 150 roubles, so I, Teoś, and you have contributed 50 roubles each. . . . . I did not use your money on anything else, for it was put in the bank in your name, and I could have put in even the biggest sums, and they would not have given me back even a penny. Such is the law. . . . .

M[ARYA] and JÓZEF with THEIR FAMILY

came to us, of female kind; she is 6 months old, is healthy and keeps well.

Inform us, my dear ones, what is the news with you, how does your health serve you, how do you succeed, and how about your progeny? Do you think of increasing your family now, or only when you have put some capital aside? . . . .

MARYA and JÓZEF with THEIR FAMILY

318 November 12, 1911

. . . . BELOVED LUCIA AND STAŚ: . . . . We are glad that you are both in good health and success, and the proof of it is that you intend to buy a house. May God help you, my dear ones! Happy the man who does not need to pay this awful tribute of rent, having the opportunity to come to [acquire] his own property.

My dear L. and S., probably you think more than once . . . . why do I write to you so seldom? But you will agree that I have many reasons to be downhearted and sluggish and lazy toward everything, so to speak. I shall explain to you at least some part of these reasons. Well, you know what I passed through after your departure. I lost first my wife, a year later my dear Geniusia. This year a third blow struck me, a not less hard one; my beloved little son Henio bade us farewell forever on September 13. I am unable to describe my woe; you have no idea what sorrow and pain of heart toss me after the loss of these my dearest beings. I should not wish to my worst enemy that which God sends upon me. Among such pains and afflictions one simply does not want to live; the world, even in its most beautiful colors, loses its charm, and one becomes indifferent toward everything. Verily I am that martyr whom God puts to the test and whom destiny strikes heavily. But Thy will be done, O Lord! I say only this: Ill-fated [euphemistically, instead of "accursed"] is this disease against which no remedy has been found up to the present, but whoever is afflicted with it sees an inevitable death before his eyes. And it is the most terrible disease, for it consumes gradually, leaving the mind conscious almost until the moment of agony. And how many victims it swallows at different ages, mostly in youth. I will add only this, that it cannot be described, what a grief tears the heart in looking upon the slow agony of a dear being when you are unable to help, to give some relief or even some

familial organization was evidently the same as everywhere among the Polish peasants. And the disorganization cannot be explained merely by the influence of modern life, since it exists already in the older generation and could hardly develop so rapidly in the young generation if it had not been prepared.

The second feature is the "philosophical" attitude toward social and religious problems which we find in the letters of Tomasz and Aleksander. It is not Polish in its form, but reminds us of the socialistic and mystical reflections, usually clad in poetical expressions, of the Russian home-bred "philosophers of life." The route by which the influence came is easily explained; it can be only the Russian literature. Accordingly, those attitudes are rather superficial, particularly with Tomasz; they do not greatly influence the practical life.

THE FAMILY BARSZCZEWSKI

Jan Barszczewski, a farmer
His wife
Tomasz, Stanisław, Antoni, Aleksander — his sons
Józefa Kryszczak, Wiktora Błaszczuk — his daughters
Antonina, wife of Tomasz
Marya (Wiszniewska), wife of Stanisław
Marya (Górska), wife of Aleksander
Paulina, wife of Antoni
Aleksander Kryszczak, husband of Józefa
Alfons, son of Tomasz
Adela, daughter of Wiktora Błaszczuk
Stefan Górski, brother of Marya, Aleksander's wife
Stefan's father

BARSZCZEWSKI SERIES

The family Barszczewski lives on the limits of ethnographical Poland. The province of Grodno has a mixed Polish, Lithuanian, and White Ruthenian population. As it lies outside of the kingdom of Poland fixed in 1815, the efforts at Russification have always been stronger and more continuous there; thus, there is a certain influence of Russian culture. These two factors explain certain differences in attitudes when compared with the normal psychology of the Polish peasant. The infiltration of eastern influences may perhaps be the reason for the marked dissolution of the family relation which we find here. The father does not live with the mother (No. 322), Stanisław quarrels with Józefa, with Kryszczak, with Aleksander B., and breaks off relations almost completely with his parents—all because of certain economic misunderstandings. Tomasz writes an exceptionally hard letter to his mother when she asks for help (No. 328). Their brother-in-law, Stefan, is accused of indifference by his sister and parents. And it is evident from other facts that this situation is the result of the dissolution of a former state of greater solidarity. Indeed the claims of familial solidarity are the same as in a normal Polish family. For example, everybody asks Stanisław for money on the basis of the familial relations. And those claims are still partly recognized; Tomasz had lent money to Stanisław, Stanisław gives a dowry to his sister. More than this, we find here a typical endeavor to establish a personal connection between two members of the family who do not know each other (No. 328). Thus the fundamental

alone knows whether we shall yet speak with you, at least once before our death, and embrace you in our parental arms.

[Barszczewskis]

[Greetings and wishes from brothers.]

And now I, [your] sister Józefa, I throw myself upon your neck, dear brother, and I kiss innumerable times your brotherly lips, at least by letter. May God keep you, brother, in His care, may God's Mother help you in all your plans, may the Guardian Angel care for you and remember you at every step, as you don't forget about me and help me. You sent me for my dowry such a big sum. I did not hope to receive such a gift, those 100 roubles. Once more I return and kiss your brotherly lips, ten times for every rouble.

Your sister, loving to the grave,

Józefa Barszczewska

321 November 10, 1907

Answer: "In centuries of centuries. Amen." In the first words of my letter: "Praised be Jesus Christus."

And then I send you, brother, a low bow, and I wish you from our Lord God every good, first health, then happiness, in a land so far away from your native country. May this God's Mother defend you against every ill. O, Saint Anthony, O Miraculous, hear my prayer! And you, all Saints, help my dear brother in so far a land to pass happily his time of service. And then also I, husband of Józefa from the village Bujak, Aleksander Kryszczak, your future brother-in-law, I send you, dear brother-in-law, my lowest bow and I wish you from our Lord God every good, whatever you ask from God. And then together with my wife, your sister Józefa, we send you the lowest bow and we wish you from our Lord God to live in health and happiness in America.

Now, dear brother, you sent a letter and you speak in it about being angry with me, your sister Józefa, and with brother Aleksander. You have a reason to be angry with our brother, but with me you have no reason to be angry. You write that I took the cow. But I did not take the cow myself, but our parents themselves let me take it. It was a sort of a dowry that I took. I did not demand anything from our parents, and my husband Aleksander did not demand it, because he heard from our parents that you wrote a letter that you

319–48, TO STANISŁAW BARSZCZEWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND

319 GRODNO, November 17, 1906

[To Stanisław Barszczewski. Beginning of the letter missing.] About 70,000 people are tortured in prisons, hundreds have been shot and hanged. The spring . . . . will probably put more innocent victims to the sword than the present winter, for the blood that is shed, the fire of cities and villages, do not subdue the people but rather kindle hatred against their persecutors and oppressors. In our province it is a little quieter but at Indur robbers compelled the post-official to give them all the money from the office. In Sisdra the post-official killed one and wounded another of 12 robbers, and the others fled without money. But it does not matter much as long as there is no army with guns in villages and cities. . . . . Now everything is dear, from salt and matches up to the coat on your shoulders and the wagon of firewood at the market; cheap is only the life of the poor man, because it is taken away without question, without witnesses, without court.

Probably you are longing there, dear brother, and sometimes sorrowful. I anticipate that although such a great distance of land and sea separates you, still in your thought you visit your country, your relatives, and friends; you remember the radiant moments and the painful hours, you imagine the circumstances met long ago; your native country-house with its straw-roof and its dear inhabitants seems lovely to you; perhaps even the curved ridge between the fields or a naked stone upon the stripped soil reminds you sweetly of some mystery of the past. . . . .

TOMASZ BARSZCZEWSKI

320 VILLAGE SYTKI, December 26, 1906

OUR DEAREST SON STANISŁAW: We, your parents, inform you that we are alive and healthy, thanks to our Lord God. We wish to you also good health, and may God's Mother bless you in your health and help you in your plans, and may the Savior of the world not forget you, because you don't forget us. Truly, you are our son, because you remember our family. So we also bless you, at least in a letter, since we cannot speak with you face to face and heart to heart. God

323 [July 21, 1908]

DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: It is long that we have had no news from you, about your health and existence, and we want to know something about you—how you hammer out your happiness abroad. We know that in America it is no longer as it used to be, because a multitude of factories have stopped work. Many of our people have come back under their native roofs; but you give no news of yourself.

Since spring our parents have been living in Grodno, father with me, mother with Aleksander. With the present letter I hastily address myself to you, hoping that I may find in your kindness a gracious help for me in the present moment which is a very difficult one for me. The question is this: As you know, if you wish to earn a miserable rouble here, you must bathe it in your sweat before you receive it. In order to support my small children and my wife and to assure their existence in the future, I must, according to my obligations, rise when the night with her dark cloak begins to fly before the light of the coming day. While all people around me calmly sleep untroubled on their soft couches, I set to work in order to clear the roads for them, that when the powerful of this world walk in their leisure they may not hurt their delicate feet against any small lump of earth, or that the capricious ladies may not soil their many-colored silk dresses. The whole long day I work like an ant in an ants nest, until night drives away the last light of the day. And so days, weeks, months, and years pass, and who knows whether my whole life will not be like this?[1] Thanks to hard labor I succeeded in putting aside a small sum out of which I bought a little land and built a small house, but I cannot finish it because of lack of money; there are

[1] On this type of philosophizing, cf. Introduction: "Theoretic and Aesthetic Interests." The content—the contrast between the rich and powerful, and the poor workman—shows the influence of city life and of the workman psychology. We do not find this attitude among the peasant farmers who, even if poor, have in those matters a psychology of independent proprietors. Socialism finds little interest among the farmers, not only because of its standpoint in matters of property but also because, since the abolition of serfdom, there has developed a certain self-consciousness and pride in the peasant which render the idea of being a class oppressed by the capitalist devoid of content and difficult of acceptance. There is envy, of course, and a sentiment of injustice in the division of property, but no consciousness of being exploited—except in matters of taxes. Moreover, the peasant farmer, being the member of a family, does not feel so isolated in his struggle for life as does the workman. Tomasz is only beginning to develop the workman psychology.

would send me money for a cow. And now you write about being angry with me. But I did not take it myself. Our parents said so, "We have, thanks to God, two cows, so take the old one, and the young one will remain with us, and when your brother sends you money, you will buy another, or you will have it for something else."

O, dear brother-in-law, if you knew, what a misfortune I had. A cow, when calving, went away [died], and a young horse, 3 years old, died also. Therefore we beg you, dear brother-in-law, don't be angry with me and with my wife, because we have a farm which, thanks to God, cannot be counted as small—two parts of [my father's] farm (the third is taken away for my uncle), and 10 desiatinas [= 20 morgs = 26 acres] which I bought. . . . . And what you say about taking the cow away, I don't mind it, but your parents said themselves, "For such a large farm it would not be nice of us not to give the cow."[1] And they said, "Take the cow, children, and when Stanisław sends you money, you will buy another, and for us this young one will be enough." I gave them hay and vetch for their cow. So now, my wife and I, we beg you, brother-in-law, to keep your promise. Yes, dear brother, you have no reason to be angry. We beg you, if you cannot give us, then lend us at least, because we need it now very much. Goodbye.

JÓZEFA and ALEKSANDER KRYSZCZAK

322 [Spring, 1908]

[Three-fourths of the letter filled with greetings from all the members of the family.] And I, Aleksander, write further about how all this happened. Brother, you are very angry with me, because it happened so in our life. It is not you and not I who arranged it, but our Lord God himself sent it. In our life we were compelled to bear greater misery than this one, and we bore it; so we must bear this one also. My brother, if we don't forgive each other, our Lord God will not forgive us. You said, brother, to provide for the wedding of Józefa. So I gave such a wedding as was suitable. It cost all together, with the bed-furnishings, about 100 roubles, and the 100 roubles of dowry which you sent and the cow before calving, worth 80 roubles.

I did not write to you, brother, where father lives. Father is in Baciki at home. He does not wish to be with mother.

[ALEKSANDER BARSZCZEWSKI]

[1] The meaning is that Józefa's husband is a rich man, owns a large farm, and it would not be suitable if Józefa had too small a dowry.

Dear brother, we are not very well satisfied that we have to demand money from Aleksander. It would be much better for us to receive it from those hands into which we gave it [from you directly, since you borrowed it from us].

Dear Brother-in-law Stefan, we, Tomasz and Antonina, send you a low bow, and your not-yet-known brother-in-law Aleksander Barszczewski and your sister Marya send you a low bow also. You ask how is it in Grodno, whether employment can be found. Dear brother-in-law, those employments are very difficult to find. And, dear Stefan, we beg your pardon about this ship-ticket, because you were offended and very angry with us. Now you say, brother and brother-in-law, that we are becoming very full of honor [sensitive]. Oh, no! You have pride and honor, but we don't have honor.[1] . . . .

[Tomasz, Antonina, Aleksander, Marya]

Dear brother Stefan, you ask about father; but why do you not write to father? You have not sent a single letter to father, and father has waited and waits still. Father keeps the farm for you, and you don't think at all about him. Remember about your father. Father remembers about you and takes care of everything. Father ordered the monument, and it is already done, for a deposit has been paid; but it is not yet paid for entirely, because father has now no money, so he is waiting until spring. Perhaps God will give some possibility, or perhaps the son [yourself] will send something. . . . .

[Marya Barszczewska]

325 May 25, 1909

Dear Companion, Mr. Stanisław: [Usual greetings and wishes.] And now I beg your pardon for not writing for so long a time, but I was on a trip for 3 weeks, and when I came it was just then work, planting season in the garden. You know I have not been at home for two years, so everything was gone to waste. I rested for two days and began to work during the day; and the evenings are short, one must hurry to sleep. . . . . The journey was neither good nor bad, so that, thanks to God, I came through happily, only when I arrived at Grodno, I had a small accident. When I left the car

[1] "Honor" means with the peasant personal pride shown in familial and communal relations and mainly in economic matters. It is therefore not always a virtue.

neither stoves, nor doors, nor windows, nor many other things. I can borrow nowhere, even at 10 per cent, and now the time hurries me to finish it. So I beg you, dear brother, don't refuse my request, send me the soonest possible at least what you owe me, and hereby you will do a great service to myself and to my family. You know, fear comes upon me when I remember that if I don't have my own small home when my strength and my health refuse their service and I shall be compelled to take a stick into my hand as a help to my feet, that I shall then have to spend the rest of my days in some damp and half-dark cellar. I feel ill at this thought. I endeavored to add one penny to another in the measure of my strength and capacity in order to secure myself against any black hour, and to have at any rate a roof of my own.

Besides what you owe, please tell Stefan that we beg him to lend us about 50 roubles, and at the first opportunity we promise to give it back, with our thanks. . . . .

TOMASZ and ANTONINA BARSZCZEWSKI

324 February 4, 1909

. . . . DEAR BROTHER STANISŁAW: . . . . We beg your pardon, don't be angry with us if we offended you about this ship-ticket, because we did not know at whose cost you counted it, and now we thank you for explaining to us how it ought to be. Aleksander says that he will give us 100 roubles [of the debt he owes you] and we thank you for it, for your good will and your good actions. We thank also our brother Aleksander, because he did not disavow that [debt], which he pays us. . . . .

Now it is your parents who write. Dear son, you write to us, your parents, and you ask us about the money which you sent. But you sent us 50 roubles when Aleksander came from the army, which were for his journey, and you sent the rest at our disposition, and now you ask about it. The 150 roubles [additional] which you sent, you wrote and said yourself in your letter that you were providing for the marriage of Józefa, and we did everything, as you wrote, we your father and mother, your parents. And now, Stanisław, you demand 200 roubles from Aleksander. We ask you what [200 roubles]? He is giving 100 roubles to Tomasz, and 100 roubles were spent for our different expenses, for wedding-clothes, marriage-feast, and different things. . . . .

but it is not enough. I have a piece of land, but I hate to sell it. If you come you can take it for your house, and if you don't want it I shall then sell it to somebody else and give you the money back. I should like to borrow money here, but nobody will give it to me. Good men have none and bad men are envious. Now I inform you, dear brother, that my house costs me 705 roubles, and the cellar 105 roubles. I beg you, dear brother, together with my wife, don't refuse my request. . . . . Now your [god]son Alfons greets you, wishes you every good and begs you to come.

[Tomasz Barszczewski]

328 [Probably winter, 1910–11]

. . . . I, Aleksander, your brother, and my wife Marya and my children, we Barszczewskis, send you a greeting brother Stanisław and sister-in-law. We don't yet know our sister-in-law, but by letter we kiss you, brother and sister-in-law, and we wish you, in the name of Jesus, health and whatever you want from God. And now I ask you, brother, whether our Lord Jesus loved the world or the man? I say, the man, because for his sake He was hung upon the cross, and He loved the man. When hanging upon the cross, He saw John under the cross, and said to his mother, "There standing near you is your son." And He said to John, "That is your mother." So He called us sons of Mary, and His brothers. Our Lord Jesus says to us, "Brothers, love God, and I will love you." Our Lord Jesus orders men to love one another and to call one another brothers. Why do we, children of the same father and the same mother, not love one another? Why? Because fire is kindled among us, and hell burns, and satans rejoice, that we, brothers, live well and remember one another and love one another in such a way [irony]. Oh, may God and the Holiest Mother grant us, brothers, to love one another; as Mary loved our Lord Jesus, so we ought to love one another and have charity. As Christ our Lord said, "Love one another and have charity, then your Highest will love you."[1] But you, brother, did you remember that you had a father and a mother in your land? You forgot how your mother nursed you, how many nights she did not sleep. You went to make money, and you forgot that you

[1] The whole religious introduction may be either an imitation of a sermon or a result of "philosophizing" under Russian influence, as with Tomasz. But from this point to the end the letter is typically Polish and peasant.

somebody stole my purse with my money. There was not much, five roubles with some copecks, and American, Belgian, Dutch, German, coins. I don't regret the Russian money, but I do those strange coins, because I gathered them for remembrance. And moreover, it was not nice, an American coming home in a cab and asking the landlady to pay the cabman. Everything else I brought arrived safely. . . . . I gave the ear-rings to your sister-in-law, for which she thanks you very much. She is very much pleased. Tomasz bought a lot and built a small house, your second brother bought also and builds, and your parents are in Grodno, your father with Tomasz, mother with the younger son, and so they live. Only they are very angry with Tomasz because you wrote to the younger brother to give Tomasz your money. Tomasz took 100 roubles, and the rest remains with the younger brother, because both of them need it. They both bought [lots] and they are both building.

[Signature missing]

326 September 5, 1910

. . . . We inform you, dear brother, that we received 200 roubles of money, and [we], your brother and sister-in-law, thank you very much for not refusing our request. Now, brother Stanisław, you asked whether our parents are alive, so we answer you and inform you that they left for the country, because mother was very ill and she was afraid of dying in Grodno, so they left for the old place. But, thanks to God, now they are in good health. . . . . Now you ask, brother, about Chodorowski. He is now a great lord, he does not even wish to speak to us, because he has opened a beershop and a store. You say that you sent him 3 letters, and he says that he has received none. . . . .

TOMASZ BARSZCZEWSKI [Probably written by his son.]

Now your [god]son bows to you. He tends the cow.

327 November 7, 1910

DEAR BROTHER: [Generalities about health.] I heard, dear brother, that you wrote that you intended to come in a year. So we beg you, come, and we will live here as best we can. Now I beg you, dear brother, if you can, send me 100 roubles. I don't want them for drinking, but I should like to buy another cow. I have some roubles,

my work, but I want to buy a piece of land. In our village they are making colonies,[1] and it is very difficult to live. I was much better off before, because I had no trouble about pasture, but profited from the common pasture. . . . . But now everybody has his own piece of land in a single lot, and everybody pastures upon his own lot; and as to me, you know that my whole property is a garden, where I must live and plant, and I have no place to pasture. Well, there is in our village a piece of field for sale, I don't know whether you remember or not, left by the old Pietruczak. The youngest son went to another village *w przystępy* [provincialism, meaning probably "joining his wife and her property"], but his own piece of land is a part of his inheritance from his father. But he is too far away to cultivate it, and he wishes to sell it, and he said to me, "Buy this piece of land from me, and you will have a field and a pasture." So, my brother, that is the reason why I beg you and my sister-in-law to help me and to lend me this sum of money. If you are afraid that I will not give it back, I will send you my note, I will certify it with the notary and send it to you beforehand, and then you will send me the money. I beg you, my brother, with my whole heart. I have no money, and what can I do? Among us it is very difficult to borrow. I beg you for a speedy answer, whether you will lend me or not. Answer me with an open heart. . . . .

AN[TONI] [and] PAULINA BARSZCZEWSKI

331 [November 27, 1907]

. . . . DEAR BROTHER STANISŁAW: . . . . We are very unhappy because during this whole year we had not a happy hour, only continuous sorrow. We intended to build a house, but lumber is dear; we must endeavor up to the last [not clear]. Before we began it our mother died; some weeks afterward my husband's brother was called to military service; after some weeks more my husband's father died; some weeks passed after this, and our oldest son died. Such a continuous misery, and tears shed in a stream! Dear brother, I kiss you, at least by letter, and I beg you, don't forget about me, because you know that we come from the same blood. . . . .

Your loving sister,

WIKTORA

[1] A "colony," is a new type of peasant farm. Cf. Wróblewski series, No. 53, note.

left old parents. Do you know, brother, what a sorrow there was when our mother was dying? She called to us, "My sons, why do I not see you? You went far away into the world, and you forgot about us." What a pity it was when our mother was dying that there was nobody to wipe the tears from her eyes. And nevertheless in dying she blessed [her sons], and she blessed you, brother Stanisław. She did not forget you, although you forgot your mother. Before her death she wrote asking for help, then I borrowed some money and sent it to them; but Tomasz wrote such a letter that our father could not listen when they read it to him, so he wrote me. . . . .

ALEKSANDER BARSZCZEWSKI

329 VILLAGE SYTKI, December 29, 1913

MY DEAREST SON STASIO AND MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW: I, your father, send you my blessing. May God bless you in your intentions and help you; whatever you wish for yourselves, I wish it to you. And now I inform you, dear children, that I am alive, but as to my health, I scarcely live in this world. I cannot nourish myself [take the same food] as before, and to tell the truth, it is very hard for me to live now. And I inform you, dear son, that we buried your mother 3 years ago, but you did not know about mother's death, because you forgot about us. It seems to me that 7 years have passed since we spoke to one another by letters. More than once we wept for you, thinking that you were no longer alive. But at last we received news from you, and I was glad that in my old days I heard at least by letter some words about your life and success. Now I beg you, my son, don't forget about me, your old father, and perhaps God will not forget about you. I wish you, my dear children, every good, and above all health. Your father, old already,

JAN BARSZCZEWSKI

[Follow greetings from brother and an old companion.]

330 May 19, 1914

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW: . . . . I, your brother Antoni, address myself to my brother Stanisław with a great request. My dear brother, I, your brother, with great timidity beg you to be so good and to lend me at least 300 roubles. I will give it back, every penny, because, to tell the truth, I have enough to live on from

HALICKI SERIES

In the Barszczewski series we noticed certain effects which Russian influence has upon the peasant on the eastern border of ethnographical Poland. Here we find the German influence manifested in the west. The Halicki's live in a small town in the province of Posen. They are not peasants, but belong to the lower bourgeoisie. The original difference in attitudes between the peasant class and the lower bourgeoisie (handworkers, shopkeepers, etc.) in small towns was, however, rather small. In fact, the Polish bourgeoisie was constituted mainly of two elements—German immigrants of the bourgeois class and Polish peasants settled in towns. In small towns the latter element prevailed. Town life developed, of course, different attitudes in economic, and to some extent in religious, life, but the character of familial life and the relation toward the community remained essentially the same, and even in economic life most of the fundamental features of the peasant are preserved, e.g., quantification of economic values, property as fundamental category. Nevertheless these old attitudes disintegrate more rapidly in towns, and any external influence shows its effects much sooner in a town than in a village.

And this is precisely true in the case of the Halickis. The hard, business-like attitude toward life which characterizes the Prussian organization has been assimilated by the Poles in the province of Posen; this assimilation was necessary in view of the economic and national struggle which they have to carry on. The changed attitudes require a reorganization of the old familial and communal solidarity upon a new basis, and this reorganization is going on. But

To my godfather:

DEAR FATHER, I send you my lowest bow, bowing below your knees, and I kiss both your hands. I inform you that I am healthy, thanks to God, and I wish you the same, good health from our Lord God, every virtue and happiness. You ask me whether I learn, so I will tell you that I wish it very much, but now it is cold and snow fell, and I have no shoes, only old slippers. I kiss your hands and I beg you for a pair of shoes, and then I beg your pardon.

The sun is set, the light is out, my pen slipped from my hand, I want to sleep. Goodbye!

Your well-wishing,

ADELA BŁASZCZUK [a very young child]

. . . . He is quiet and talks little. He did not wish to take the room without boarding, so he will pay 60 marks. But I don't know how it will be further, for you know well how our family is. I told Jadwiga to go away. Now she weeps and probably she won't go. Tadzio works in the mill. . . . .

And now I come back to your letter. How nicely you have described everything as in a book! May God give you a good place, where you can pay easily the debt for your journey. You know probably everything, how it is in our country, about the arming. People say that you must also come back. What a sorrow I feel! Perhaps soon they won't even let your letters come through. . . . .

I finish my plaintive letter, my son. Praise be to God for your health. Stasia has written more at length to you; I don't want us both to bore you with the same things. . . . .

Now, my child, I commend you to God, to His holy care. May everything happen to you, whatever you wish from God. I remain,

Your mother to the grave,

R. HALICKA

Write to Kazio and Michał. Greetings for everybody. I am feeble, but I want absolutely to write with my own hand; it seems to me as if I talked with you.[1]

333 December 5, 1912

[Quotation from a religious song.]

DEAR POLIKARP: Since you left this song always rings in our ears. On Sunday, after you left, it was sung in the choir during the holy mass; we and mother could not withhold our tears. Mother in particular is very low in spirits. She was sick, and I was even afraid that this sickness would take a serious turn. Now, thanks to God,

[1] The mother's familial attitudes remain unchanged, and while Polikarp does not show much solidarity with regard to the other members of the family he keeps the traditional attitude toward his mother. The particularly near relation between the mother and this son (cf. Nos. 337, 338, 341, 345) is probably due to the fact that he is the oldest and took care of the family after his father's death. On the side of the son there seems to be a real affection for his mother, but besides this the conscious tendency also to be and to be considered a *model* son. This feeling of his own righteousness must have been assisted by the attitude of the mother who always gave him as an example to the younger children.

wherever it is not yet achieved the new attitudes merely dissolve the old social system, and we find such situations as the present one.

One special point is strongly emphasized in this series—the character of a letter as means of literary expression and the feeling of obligation to make the letters as good as possible from the literary point of view.

THE FAMILY HALICKI

R. Halicka, a widow	
Polikarp	her sons
Kazio (Kazimierz)	her sons
Michał	her sons
Tadek (Tadzio, Tadeusz)	her sons
Pela	her daughters
Jadwiga	her daughters
Stasia (Stacha, Stanisława)	her daughters
Mania (Maryśka, Marysia)	her daughters
Staś (Stanisław) Rakowski, Pela's husband	
Krukowski, Jadwiga's betrothed	
Grandmother	

332–47, TO POLIKARP HALICKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS IN POLAND, AND A LETTER (348) FROM HALICKI TO THE AUTHORS.

332 ZALESIE, October 7, 1912

DEAR SON: I thank you for your letter, for which I waited with longing. We knew that one ship sunk with the men. Glory be to God that you are healthy and happy. I beg you, my dear son, write to us as often as you can, you know how glad I am when I can speak with you at least by letters. . . . . My sickness has decreased a little; during the past week I was so sick that I did not recognize my friends. I don't know whence this sickness came . . . . but Stasia knew how to help me, and God is good and let me leave my bed. And you, dear Polikarp, have provided me so well with housegoods that I can have everything, whatever a sick person may need. When I look upon the furniture bought from your economized money I must shed tears. In your room lives your successor, Mr. Frankowski.

today it seems as if he wanted to avenge himself upon my family, as if he hated them. He won't let the children come to our home. Although for the sake of appearances we don't show it to people, yet as we are in business, people notice enough. And for his own family he fights to the last. Surely he would like to have them with him. They moved to Leszno, God knows for how long. If they had known that Staś would come so rapidly to his own business, they would not have done it. What I shall have to struggle with still! And it pains me still more when I see discord at home, lack of attachment of one to another. My heart burst open! I should like to sympathize more with them during my life, but they [the boys] are too hard. Although they have Frankowski's example it is of no use. I don't praise him too much—I know little of his past life—but as far as we know him it is difficult to find such a kind and quiet man. But Michał! If he does not improve he will perish miserably. Nobody praises him.

Perhaps I shall bore you with my scribbling, but I don't know how to compose a letter as well as you do. Moreover I have written it during a whole week, and I have a sore hand. Only I beg you very much, you have already the letter from Krukowski, help them as you can, but keep him in hand. . . . . Don't be obstinately grudging against Jadwiga, for we have enough to suffer from others [outside of the family]. Today I so much want concord among our family. I have always desired it, but today, after a new catastrophe with Staś—perhaps they will write you about it from home. I finish this letter at home, for I cannot do it in my own house from fear of Staś. . . . .

I wish you healthy and merry holidays—health, happiness, and God's blessing in the New Year.

I have still so much to write—but later.

Your loving sister,

PELA

334 December 16, 1912

DEAR POLIKARP: I write to you for the first time. . . . . I wish you a Merry Christmas. . . . . I noticed that you have stopped writing. But you ought to keep in yourself the feeling of a *Poznaniak* [man from Posen] and not to have already that of an American. If

she is somewhat calmer. I would not grieve you with sad news; I think nevertheless that it will be better if I describe to you everything sincerely.

I am very pained that we have spent the last times so sadly. Perhaps you regret it yourself, for if you had known that you would get so far away certainly you would not have acted thus, and you would have spared our mother's tears. And Stasia, and even Jadwiga, is not so bad, although she has a sharp tongue. Particularly, I could not bear it that you hated her so. What should I say? I ought to avenge myself more than you did. Perhaps you won't be pleased with me for mentioning old sins. But I know how much we have all wept when we learned that you were to go away in earnest. It seemed to us so improbable. Jadwiga cried for whole days that she did not bid you goodbye. Everybody said that it would be better if Michał had left, he would have caused less sorrow.

Your place is occupied by a Mr. Frankowski. The boys ought to take him for a model. What a quiet man! For whole evenings he stays at home, reads, plays with the boys at different games. Mother would even prefer sometimes if he went somewhere or shut himself up in his room; she could then do more [housework]. Mania is with me during the day, helps me in everything and waits impatiently for the evening to come—they are so merry and jest so much there at home. But Jadwiga stays with me continually; she helps me in sewing and sleeps here. I have only 3 girls for sewing, and there is very much work. . . . . Don't wonder that we did not answer you sooner. Staś [husband] committed it to me, and I have too much to do. The business goes on very well. . . . . But although we have enough to eat and to drink I am not satisfied with all this. Staś is iniquitous. He never gets drunk but he has such a something in him that more than once the worst ideas come into my mind. I put all the fault upon myself and reproach myself [for having married him], and you would do the same. . . . . You write me that you are pleased there and succeed well. Thanks to God, if it is really so, but it seems to me that you try to stifle yourself [your feelings]. I cannot believe, I know your disposition, I know how much I suffered without showing it, although I was judged very bad. And today, when I reflect, it seems to me that there was nobody worthy of my sufferings. Staś would not be so bad of himself, if he were better educated and did not lack religion. This kills me, that he was able thus to pretend. And

He said: "He is able, but the lord must control him well." Michał is preparing my grave. He keeps company with Kostek and does not care for his own good. Ask Frankowski yourself what will become of Michał. Tadek will be a man, for he is diligent. . . . . As to the letter [with gossip] about which you write . . . . don't mind it at all. We have still much other slandering to bear. We don't go anywhere, we don't talk with anybody, and people cannot hold out nevertheless. . . . . Balcer must leave his place, for the lord noticed that he permitted himself too much with Praska, and both were dismissed in order not to give scandal to young people. . . . .

YOUR MOTHER

Dear Polikarp, don't wonder if mother does not write herself, but her eyes are weak and she is continually unwell, and she wishes nevertheless the letters to be written in her name.

336 February 3, 1913

DEAR POLIKARP: . . . . I shall describe to you shortly the news from Zalesie. Last month we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the last insurrection. On January 22, there was a divine service, and the day before, a mass for the dead. Our two veterans [ancient insurgents who lived in Zalesie] were invited to Posen, but they remained here. At every meeting of every association they occupy the first place. . . . .[1]

Yesterday we had a representation, arranged by the united associations, but after this there were no dances, only social plays. Jadwiga performed her part splendidly. Michał also played in this theater. . . . . As to the pastoral mass [on Christmas night], I cannot describe it, for I was not in the church. I know only that they sang very nicely.

After your departure it was very sad at home, but now it will be sadder still, for Michał also left us this morning. But we have much fun with Tadzio. Once during the supper he asked Mr. Frankowski and Kazimierz, "How much do you pay to your men? For *I* pay

[1] Great respect is shown to the men (of any social class) who took part in the Polish insurrection of 1863. They are considered in some way as the keepers of the ideal of Poland's independence and are assumed to have an exceptionally high moral standard. The interesting point is that in spite of their difficult situation as exiles, almost all of them have grown up to the moral level which the public respect imposes upon them.

I could find there some suitable position, I should come next spring, for here I am bored to death. . . . .[1]

The [family-] war is a little calmed, but not for long. I hope you don't intend to come back while it lasts. . . . . Mother says that when she receives a letter from you she feels as if she spoke with you. . . . . In the house of Rakowski [brother-in-law, Pela's husband], there was an outbreak lately. R. told mother to get out of his house, without any reason. But don't be anxious about mother; I will avenge her. Pela is much changed, for R. has beaten her severely. A real crazy bandit. If you write to him abuse him soundly. And don't make him a gift of your money [ask him to pay his debt to you], for he has scarcely got feathers, and he wants to fly. [He became arrogant toward his wife's family as soon as his own business developed. Probably he was formerly dependent upon them in financial matters.]

Your brother,

KAZIMIERZ

335 New Year, 1913

DEAR SON: . . . . I was very glad to receive the money, but I felt how parsimoniously you must have lived, dear son, wishing to help me for the holidays. Even if I had not the lord's help [probably a widow's pension], I should not ask anything from you. Try only to put some money aside and to come back as soon as possible to our country, at least for a short time. Naturally only if we have peace, for in the contrary case you must give up coming, for I hope that you won't come here for death. Take care of your health and life. Krukowski and we are waiting for your answer to his letters. It would be better [if it comes] for you would describe everything, but I believe that he won't mind [if it does not come], but will go. He has relatives enough there. Frankowski is no longer here. The reason was that he saw here no future at all. . . . . He noticed it at once and tried secretly to find another place, and he succeeded. . . . . When he bade goodbye to the priest . . . . the latter asked him whether Michał [the writer's son] is able to occupy his [Frankowski's] place.

[1] The tendency to get away from home is becoming so general among Polish boys that it may be considered one of the most important causes of emigration. Even in Poland children feel as a burden their dependence on their parents and their obligations to them, and, of course, this feeling can only increase in America.

As to the gossip of Ososka, I have calmed her already. Now they begin to talk about the Ganzes. Ososka said that Mrs. Ganz and her daughter are running after men, and Mr. C. took an aversion to her [the daughter] once and forever.

Dear son, I inform you that Krukowski intends certainly to go to America. Before leaving he will be engaged to Jadwiga, and when he comes happily to America, he will take her at once. Only I am afraid that you won't receive her as a brother [should]. But it is true that her character has changed and she is now very serious. When Krukowski comes show him where he can find the best work. Don't be afraid about money, for he finds his way himself. I think that it would be the best for them if they could settle in Milwaukee, for it is the best to be among one's own people. You know Krukowski, that he is a good man. . . . .

Wherever I go, everybody asks how you succeed. Our priest asks often about you; whether you intend to remain there and how you succeed. I say only that good people get on well everywhere, while bad people are always sour. . . . .

YOUR MOTHER

338 February 19, 1913

DEAR AND BELOVED SON: I received the money for which I send you a hearty "God reward." I rejoice very much, dear child, that being in such a far world, you nevertheless remember about me. I doubt whether any of your brothers will do it. But certainly God will reward you. Dear son, it is not your duty. Why should you ever refuse anything to yourself? And, moreover, you have still the burden of the journey [the debt]. So once more, may God reward you! . . . .

As I have mentioned already, dear son, Krukowski is going on March 8, for he saved so much that now he can boldly go, and if he does not like it he can boldly come back. Before leaving, i.e., next Sunday, he will exchange rings with Jadwiga. So I beg you, consider him a member of our family, i.e., in the beginning, until they marry. Later let them do as they like. Krukowski . . . . confessed to me sincerely that if he had married Jadwiga at once he would be happier today. But it is not his fault. . . . . He told me that he loved you much. And you know how Jadwiga has always intended to go to America. Perhaps fortune will be kind to her. . . . . I shall send

so and so much." . . . . They have already given him the title "director of the mill." But in the office-work he is very industrious. They are satisfied with him and believe that he will be a good merchant. . . . .

Now sad days will begin here [because of Lent]. We shall spend Sundays only in reading books. . . . .

I finish my short writing. . . . . Correct my faults, for it is my first letter.

I embrace you heartily.

MARYŚKA [MANIA]

337 February 10, 1913

DEAR SON: . . . . For some days I have had the intention of writing this letter, but I could not gather my thoughts, for my heart was burdened with sorrow, because Michał also was leaving us. I am very anxious that he may get back his good name. You know him very well, so you can guess how he is. He has found a place himself and wanted absolutely to go into the world, but when the moment of separation came, he could not withhold tears. I have at least this one comfort, that he made his peace with God. In the evening he went to town to confession, the next morning he received holy communion, and he left on the third day. . . . . He wrote that he is working with a veteran of the last insurrection. I hope that under the influence of such a man he will be edified.[1] You will receive soon a letter from him. . . . .

Dear son, Stasia and I have had sad dreams. We saw you always gloomy and weeping. But, as I guessed from your letter, you must have borne painful moments when you were leaving the Ganzes.[2] Only take care that these disagreeable things don't happen any more. I beg you for God's sake, don't poison your health with this, that I may see you and embrace you once more, as my most beloved child.

What a joy it was when we received the parcel of tea! It has a very good taste and seems to us more healthful than ours. . . . . I was very glad that you had such an idea. Grandmother even mentioned once that as you remember about your mother, our Lord God won't forget you. . . . .

[1] Cf. No. 336, note.

[2] He was engaged to their daughter and left because of some quarrel. The mother means that the bad dreams are already fulfilled and no further misfortune is to be anticipated.

341 June 28, 1913

DEAR SON: . . . . I had bad forebodings about Jadwiga's journey, and I was not mistaken, for you probably know already from Krukowski, what a difficult journey she had, and that she is sick. I cannot sleep at night until I receive better news. . . . . It is nobody's fault, she has what she wanted. Well, may God the Highest grant her health! She left with tears and begged my pardon. . . . . You will agree, dear Polikarp, that she has suffered penance enough during this journey. . . . . We received your photographs. They are so natural that Stasia and Mania kissed them. They put them upon a table and adorn you every day with fresh flowers. [Enumerates the gifts which she sent through Jadwiga.] People don't cease to wonder that you remember me so and send money so often.

YOUR MOTHER

342 August 13, 1913

DEAR POLIKARP: . . . . I wonder why you always find in my letter some desire of vengeance, some bitterness, some sharp tone. Even if I had any reason to avenge myself, I am unable to perform any vengeance; I don't know at all to whom my vengeance could be addressed. I am persuaded that only the references of Tadzio about me influence you thus. But I don't wish to write any more upon this subject. Also, I won't inform you about the good and would-be good actions of Tadzio. Be sure that he has remained the same "little angel" [devil] as he was formerly. You write me to accept your model remarks without anger. Was I ever angry about them? From my letters you can conclude that I am angry only with Tadzio's stories about me. Well, I won't exonerate myself before you, for I have no reason. . . . .

Rakowski is now rather calm, but he does not talk with mother. . . . .

KAZIMIERZ

343 August 17, 1913

DEAR BROTHER: You mentioned in your last letters to mother that Marysia and I had forgotten about you. But it is not so bad as you think. I was a little hurt because I was the first who wrote you and I did not receive any answer. . . . . I thought that it was not

you something through Krukowski; I think perhaps cigars and a bottle of cognac. . . . . And I beg you, take care of Krukowski, lest some American girl should seduce him. Well, God's will. . . . .

YOUR MOTHER

339 April 3, 1913

DEAR SON: . . . . We had here nice [Easter] holidays. Michał was away only 3 days, he couldn't hold out longer. . . . . O my God, how Michał is changed! He sat at home, and when I told him to go and amuse himself he petted me and said, "Eh, mother, I feel the best with you." Imagine this! He, who was so insolent! I won't even describe how they behaved, he and Kazimierz, after your going. And their demands! . . . . Kazimierz is a little angry for the truth which you wrote him. . . . .

Tell me what you want. I will send you everything through Jadwiga. For, as you know, the ship-ticket will come soon. And may God grant it, for I have already spent money enough. And people envy her, marrying Krukowski.

Grandmother is mortally sick. All her children came, and she blessed us all. . . . .

Krukowski wept much in leaving. When Jadwiga receives the ship-ticket, we shall order a mass. The singers here want to sing "Veni Creator" for her.

Your truly loving

MOTHER

340 May 25, 1913

DEAR POLIKARP: I thank you heartily for your letter. You ask me why I have not given any news about myself for so long a time. I think you gave the reason yourself in writing me that I am drinking, loafing about restaurants, etc. . . . . I wonder much that you, being in America, know better what I am doing than myself. Evidently you ought to know that the news of your correspondent (I know even who it is) is not at all in accordance with the truth. [News about his future examination for journeyman-builder; complaints about his master.] Well, but all this will last only for a certain time. I think that this will be the last winter I shall spend at home. I don't know yet where I shall go, but I will *not* remain here.[1] . . . .

KAZIMIERZ

[1] Cf. No. 334, note.

never said a prayer, slept over the time of mass. Perhaps he got so Germanized in that last place. I pity him much, but I cannot help him.

Dear Polikarp, in your letters to Michał I read about a secret which you had confided to him. If you will not be angry with me I will tell you. Leave off this intention. The actor's life is miserable and your health is not good enough. If you were in Posen, it would be another question; we should admire you also. It is well that mother does not know about it, for certainly she would have counted it among the worst crimes.[1] This news came to the ears of Pela and Mania; even Kazio and Tadzio know nothing.

Describe to me what coiffure is fashionable in America and what dresses. Jadwiga writes so little that I cannot get an answer to any questions, and Krukowski does not write at all. Soon it will be mother's name-day, and on September 2, that of Frankowski. Don't forget to send him wishes. He got another place. . . . . Everybody invited him, ... but he did not go anywhere, he remained with us. Three days after his departure he came through Zalesie from Posen to his new place, and came to us again. He was angry, for Mrs. Ch. congratulated him on leaving his heart in Zalesie, and in general everybody in Z. says that I go nowhere because I am engaged to him. . . . . I am proud that I became an interesting person in Zalesie. Though never such an idea—to marry Frankowski—came into my head; but people talk. It is true that he got attached to us. He writes often to me, and it is difficult for me to answer him. Often if mother did not oblige me I should not do it. But I doubt whether he will be now equally attached. Probably he will be proud of his luck. . . . . Don't forget about Michał. Give him always good advice. Frankowski himself when he knew him, said that he needed continual advice and remonstrance, for he is very light-headed. . . . . I send you a hearty greeting.

Your sister,

STACHA

[1] The prejudice against the actor's life is not at all based upon any idea of the immoral character of theatrical shows—which does not exist in Poland—but upon the current conception of the actor's private life, as wandering, insecure, immoral in sexual relations, given up to drinking. The conception is drawn from the observation of wandering provincial troops half a century ago. The artistic *Bohême* is precisely the antithesis of the life-ideal of the Poles of Posen. The theater itself in Posen is an exception in public opinion because of its national importance.

pleasant for you to receive news written by your sister Stacha. But Tadek came once from the mill asking me whether I knew how to write a letter; if yes, then you ask me to write you a few words, and if not, then he said that he would help me. . . . . So I take the pen, but I have no time to compose a beautiful style, only whatever thoughts come to my head, my hand follows them obediently, in order to describe my life for a rather long time.

I must confess that I have now greater and greater duties, as the oldest in the house. The whole house rests upon me, particularly since we have a strange person at home. Mother is burdened with years, but nevertheless she is always active; she has nobody [else] to help her. Mania is in business (I should like it better if she occupied herself with sewing, for among these people she will get a bad character), and thus she must be rather served at home, ... for even if she wished to help us, she can sometimes scarcely walk, poor girl. And thus we both, mother and I, struggle with the cruel lot. I thought that when Jadwiga left there would be fewer persons at home, but instead of her there is grandmother, who can scarcely breathe. Moreover, I took an apprentice for sewing. You can imagine my yoke. In the morning I comb my ladies [she is a hairdresser], when I come home there is a great hurry about cooking dinner. (I cook myself since we have boarders.) Sometimes I have no time to breakfast. And then cleaning of rooms, the apprentice asks about work—it is maddening! And, as you know, there is no little [farm-] stock. In a word, we have very much to do. But though we work so much, life is calm, for the boys behave well enough. We can thank God that He gives us health. Moreover, you send us from time to time what you can; whatever you do for mother, you do it also for us. Often we have mirth. When your letter comes everybody tries to get it first. For example, when you wrote your last letter to mother you must have been in a splendid humor, and it caused us a great joy. . . . . Now I permit myself also to describe to you how Michał was for two weeks at home. The poor fellow, he has improved very much in his home life; we spent very pleasant hours and days. The poor boy, he looks so bad and does not care for his health. He tried to get a place, but he was dismissed everywhere. You know how mother is. She began to get anxious, he became very irritable lately, and finally he got some place in O., but he will be there only a month. Even if one wanted to put the blame on him, one could not. It is evidently his destiny. I noticed during his stay at home that he

345 September 29, 1913

DEAR SON: . . . . I received the money for which I thank you heartily. I think, and I explain to your brothers and sisters, how sparing and industrious you must be. The postmen wonder, and some people even envy me. You intended 10 marks for Michał [for his name-day]. You have a truly brotherly heart. But it is sad, for I did not give him this money at once. I could not. He sends almost every day letters with applications [for work] in answer to advertisements, and I must always give him 50 pfennigs or even 1 mark. He has even sent your photograph once, for he had no more of his own. I don't know whether he will give it back to me. If his character does not change he will only spoil your reputation. He could not stay longer in his second place. I asked him to persevere at least for a month, and even this he scarcely did. His clothes were so dirty that I had to wash them like a miller's clothes. . . . . In Posen they know his character already, and then he knows that he cannot get more than 40 or 50 marks there. He won't be able to live upon it poor boy. I spoke about him with the director of the mill. He could be employed there but he made so many mistakes in a week! Tadzio might lose his place through him. The director told me that he preferred Tadzio, and will raise his wages. . . . . Mr. S. told me once upon the street that Michał knows nothing. Now he has work for 2 or 3 weeks in the agricultural shop.

This very day I told all my children that if I turn the money which you send me to the benefit of all of them they all should be grateful to you. Is it not so? . . . .

The girls, i.e., Stasia and Mania, received a letter from you; they refused to show it to me, only they were sad and cried. What did you write them? I don't know up to the present.[1]

God reward you for having remembered your mother's name-day in this far world. Michał asked Tadzio, "Tadzio, when is mother's name-day?" Well, he is intelligent!

[YOUR MOTHER]

I rejoice always in receiving your letter as if I talked with you. You have inherited from your father this faculty of beautifully composing a letter. I notice that none of your brothers have this gift.

[1] Cf. No. 344.

344 September 16, 1913

DEAR POLIKARP: I cannot understand how my letter could have angered you so much [the letter referred to is missing], and how the moment after reading that letter could have been the most disagreeable since you have been in America. Don't believe that I, writing that letter with good intentions, wanted to give you any advice or to make any reproaches about your behaving badly. Oh no! I know your character now. I know that you have been not only a good, but a model brother, for I don't know how the others will be but I think that no one of them will behave as you. I have particularly Michał in mind, for although he was able to behave well during the 2 days which he spent at home, in reality he is not like this. Mother grieves now over the lot that awaits him. Now he works in the mill, but I don't know how long it will last. For Tadzio it is disagreeable, for he is more respected than Michał [though he is only a boy], and more than once he complains about him when he comes back home. Michał feels happy with Kostek, with whom he keeps company as if he were dependent upon him. But through this he ruins all his future. Do you know, he has become worse, not better. Even if there are strangers at home he behaves as if he were quite uneducated, and swearing is with him a usual thing. Perhaps he will have more humility when he has not a pfennig in his pockets, as it was in Kamień where he had not even money enough to send a postcard home. Mother did not write you, perhaps, about it, but I am obliged to, for you believe that he has reproaches to hear from us. But you are mistaken, for it is not he, but we who hear reproaches. Mother [does not reproach him, for she] is afraid that he may take his life. I won't write any more, for I don't know what an impression this letter will make upon you, and then it is already 1 o'clock at night and time to sleep. The best time to write is night for me, for nobody hinders me. . . . .

Be healthy, cheerful, keep far from you all troubles and don't get angry.

With kindest greeting and hearty embraces.

Always the same,

MARYŚKA

how this matter will end. Polikarp, make this sacrifice, write him a few words, they will certainly act upon him, I am sure. What a life he must lead now with the Lejowskis, where anger is always boiling. Antek L. and his father pass each other by as if they were not acquainted. How can Michał improve there? So, I beg you, grant my request. [Weather; skating; amusements.] You have forgotten about my name-day; everybody has forgotten except mother. I never remember having such a name-day. . . . .

I finish my splendid writing and kiss you many times.

Always the same,

MARYŚKA

347 February 22, 1914

DEAR POLIKARP: . . . . You ask me whether I am in such a financial position that I could go to the architectural school. Don't you know our condition? Don't you know that the money which I bring home is immediately spent? It is very nice of you that you wanted to deprive yourself and to put aside for me, i.e., to lend me, some money. I am glad that I have at least one such brother. Could not Michał send some money home, for I hear that he gets 140 marks a month? As to me, I shall see later, in May or June. I shall risk writing to Posen [to the school]. . . . . Perhaps Rakowski could also lend me some money, for I have nothing myself. . . . . There was a call to military service yesterday. Everybody was taken except 3 boys. Mother even wept from pity. . . . .

KAZIMIERZ

348 March 4, 1915

DEAR SIR: . . . . The quarrel with my sister Jadwiga arose, in my opinion, from a very trifling cause, although my mother and my sisters ascribed to it more importance.

When we were once together at a party, Jadwiga noticed that my behavior toward one of my friends was too cordial. My brothers and sisters disliked the whole family of this girl for some wrong caused us a few years ago, but I did not care about it. At home they required me to avoid altogether our so-called enemies, but I did not conform to this demand, considering such behavior not suitable in society (in the club). Although I never met this girl intentionally outside

346 February 2, 1914

DEAR BROTHER: Probably you expected to receive my letter sooner, but I could hardly find a quiet moment, for I not only have much work in the shop, it awaits me at home. When a moment comes I profit by it to sew my dresses. And now mother is with Staś and Pela, at a family-festival, for Pela's little son Polikarp is baptized today. Stacha is at a performance at the Sokoły. Everybody is away, and I am glad that I can pen a few words to you.

The winter season [in the shop] was very good, and the proprietor is satisfied. It is perhaps because the expropriation [of Polish land] is postponed and people are less criticized [when they buy in German shops. The girl is in a German shop]. I should never have believed that at such a time people would go to strangers; in our shop . . . . almost two-thirds of the buyers are Poles. Although in Zalesie exceptions are not so much made [Poles who work with Germans are not so despised], nevertheless it is very painful for me that I must be among people who persecute us continually. How glad I should be to stay at home, for there is work enough everywhere. Only mother cannot decide and keep her decision. You don't know what annoyances I must bear sometimes. In one of your letters to mother you wrote that my demands are too great. But you are mistaken. I know that somebody has written false things to you about me. But I will bear patiently everything. For, to tell the truth, I am only a victim, as you mentioned once in a letter, and I must suffer for all the others. Perhaps Jadwiga was also misused in this way and now she must suffer for it, for what nobody was willing [to say] Jadwiga had to say. Therefore it was said that she had a big mouth, and finally she was considered the worst at home.[1] But perhaps the time will come when after getting rid of this scorn she will be considered the best.

It is very difficult for me to talk about Michał, for at this thought my ideas seem to leave my head. I think that you have been also much oppressed by this news. He was always a dreamer, with no seriousness, and he will remain one. After all the letters from mother, after all the begging and imploring he decided, after a long time, to write that he lighted a cigarette with these silly stories [that he does not mind them; he is evidently accused of some dishonesty]. And here the Jew threatens mother again with the court. I don't know

[1] Cf. No. 348.

RZEPKOWSKI SERIES

The Rzepkowski's are of peasant-~~noble origin.~~ The father of Emilia and Marya and the grandfather of Zocha were brothers and farmers. The letters show the evolution from peasantry toward the middle class through two generations. The evolution is more rapid in the first branch of the family (Nos. 349, 350) than in the second; Zocha's father is still only a janitor (*stróż*) in Warsaw. Nevertheless there is a curious difference between the two generations (the two aunts on the one hand, the niece on the other) with regard to intellectual and moral refinement and in the attitude toward life-problems. The fundamental attitudes of the old women differ little from those of average peasant women, in spite of their instruction, which is much above the average peasant level. The girl, on the contrary, while preserving still a general peasant background, shows a rare self-consciousness, impressionability, and individualization —manifested, for example, in her attitude toward death. The difference is probably due to the fact that the attitudes of the lower-middle class differed less from the attitudes of the peasants thirty or forty years ago than they do now, and that the old women have lived more in the country and in small towns, while the girl has been reared in Warsaw. Perhaps also the particular sensibility of the girl has its source in her consciousness of approaching death.

of the club meetings, the gossip grew that I was secretly engaged to her. Jadwiga caught this gossip and was the first to inform mother of it. My family would never have consented to such an alliance, and I did not think of it either. In general, there was no love-relation at all with that friend. In view of the gossip, I gave no explanation but demanded that they should not annoy an innocent girl. This only strengthened the suspicions. The whole matter was later cleared up, particularly when, in consequence of this incident, I let myself be persuaded by some persons from America, who were then in Zalesie, and came with them here, leaving a splendid position and my "sweetheart." I succeeded in getting my mother's permission, promising to remember her and to come back after two years. . . . . Jadwiga refused neverthless to bid me goodbye. She is now here in America, and our relations are again harmonious. . . . .

P. Halicki

ceeded after many difficulties. The other son, Bolesław, 22 years, could not learn because of deafness. He finished only two classes in the gymnasium in Kalisz. After his father's death I sent him to the chocolate and candy factory "Cukiernicy Warszawscy," but nobody would accept him because he lacks instruction and is deaf (in one ear). The third, Maryan, 21 years, finished 6 classes in a real gymnasium and is studying in Warsaw, in the school of Wawelberg. He will become a technical engineer, but he is in only the second year, and there are four. The oldest daughter, Janina, is 17 years old; she is in a boarding school in Warsaw in the sixth class. In June she will finish there and will go to the musical conservatory, because she has great ability and talent in music. She has 4 years still to work, and then she must earn her living by lessons. The younger, Wiesława, is 16 years old, she is at the same school in the fifth class. When she finishes I shall try to get a place as teacher for her. After the death of my husband very little [money] remained; were it not for the help of the family I could not educate my children. God took their protector away when he was most necessary for the children. Michał, my youngest brother, is a priest in Dzierżenin. He took me with all my children to himself;[1] and Jakób and Klemens . . . . help with money. Thanks to their good hearts, I can instruct my children. Mother and Karusia had been also with Michał. Four years ago Karusia died. . . . . She was 55 years old. Mother died on November 4, one year ago. One half of her body was paralyzed; she lay months in her bed. Poor thing, she suffered much, but was always calm, submitting to the will of God. Her death was very easy, she slept quietly and left us orphans. God took away from us this beloved bond of the whole family. My husband died also from a heart illness. . . . . He was buried in Warsaw, because there Jakób has his tomb, where his wife is buried. Father, mother, and Karusia

[1] To have a member of the family a priest is considered the greatest luck by the peasants. The fact itself more than anything else raises the social standing of the family; some of the priest's religious character is, in the eyes of the peasant, communicated to his relatives. And in economic matters the priest proves, as we see in the present case, of the greatest help to the family. He has a good income and no personal obligations; he is supposed to preserve the attitude of familial solidarity, and he does preserve it in fact. Therefore every peasant, almost without exception, when giving instruction to his son, dreams that the latter will become a priest. We have here the same attitude which for many centuries the noble families had preserved; one son had to become a priest for the sake of the family, even if it meant a sacrifice of personal aspirations.

THE FAMILY RZEPKOWSKI

August Rzepkowski, an emigrant
Michał
Jakób
Klemens
Staś } his cousins
Emilia
Marya
Wikcia
Zocha, daughter of another cousin

349–52, TO AUGUST RZEPKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS IN POLAND

349 January 27, 1908

DEAR AUGUST: I lack words to thank you for remembering me. You gave me a great pleasure in sending your photograph and that of your family. When I came to the Radońskis (to Wikcia) and she gave me your photograph saying that it was for me and asking whether I recognized you, I could not recognize you; you have changed very much.[1] And you would not know me either. I am already a gray-haired old woman. My misfortunes, griefs, sorrows about my children ruined my health. It is already 25 years since I married, 7 years since I became a widow. I have five children, three boys and two daughters. The oldest, Kazimierz, is 23 years old. He is in a military school in Czugajewo, government Cherson. When my husband lived he was in the fourth class, and finished it after the death of my husband, but had no great wish to learn and went to the army [as volunteer].[2] But as the number of Poles in the military school is limited, for 3 years he could not pass the examination, only last year he suc-

[1] August has renewed relations with his cousins and his brother after more than twenty years of absolute silence. This sudden revival of familial feelings is a frequent case and comes without any apparent reason. Not less frequently it happens that members of a family who have never known one another feel suddenly interested, write and try to meet. This behavior is obviously due to a functioning of infantile memories, and points back to a more communistic familial organization.

[2] It is considered rather bad for a Pole to make a military career in the Russian army. As, moreover, the instruction of the army officers is very insufficient (hardly equal to the gymnasium instruction), this explains why the mother considers her son's choice as a result of his unwillingness to learn.

If you are curious and if you wish to know about me, I shall try to inform you. I am permanently with my brother, the priest Klemens, who is priest of the parish Zaremby Kościelne, and Paweł, my husband, is with my son in Sosnowiec.[1] They are working at the Nadwiślańska railway station and are getting on very well there. Jadzia, my daughter, has an elementary school in Warsaw and has been doing well, but now she has trouble, because when the government suspended the Polish School Association she had to try to get official permission to have a school, though she has a certificate and has passed the examination. Probably she will receive the permission, but she must wait.

As to myself, for my old years I chose the calm and comfortable retirement with priest Klemens.[2] I am very well situated here. I have comfortable lodging and a quiet life. The church is near, which makes me most joyful and happy for my whole life. What can be more pleasant today, in my old age, than ceaseless prayer on my lips?[3]

[1] A rather exceptional situation, particularly as the letter does not show any hostility between husband and wife. The probable explanation is the following: In peasant marriage the relation often grows rather cool with progressing age, but the tradition of common life is so strong that it is hardly broken, except when the man emigrates to America. But here, in the second, half-educated generation, the sentimental and intellectual ties between man and wife are yet hardly stronger than among peasants, while the tradition has lost its influence. The prestige of her brother, her own prestige as his housekeeper, and economic considerations doubtless play a part. Cf. note 3.

[2] She speaks of her brothers "priest" Klemens and "priest" Michał. In the intelligent class this would be ridiculous. The word "priest" is in Polish an honorific title (in fact, etymologically *ksiądz* priest, is connected with *książe* prince) and is used as equivalent of *Pan* (Mr., Sir). Now, the words "Mr." and "Mrs." are *never* used when speaking about one's own relatives, as they are in English, unless when talking to very inferior persons (master to servants). When a person speaks about his relatives to other relatives, he uses the Christian names; when to strangers, he uses the word which indicates the relation ("my brother," "my wife"). In this case the proper way would be to say simply "Klemens" or "Michał." But the difference is significant. It shows that the writer addresses her own brothers as "priest," when speaking to them. This is a sign of the enormous prestige which a priest has with her. She does not dare to assume any attitude of equality toward her brothers, although she is above the average peasant level. A peasant often does not dare to sit in the presence of her brother-priest if strangers are present.

[3] The position of a priest's housekeeper is envied because of the economic privileges, but particularly because of the nearness of the church, the privileges she enjoys in the church (she has her own bench near the altar), and the respect she receives from the other women in the parish.

are buried in Ciechanów, because Jakób erected a family tomb of the Rzepkowskis there, as uncle Wiktor is a priest there and will be there up to his death. Mother wished father to be buried there and uncle to take care of the chapel and to celebrate the holy mass for the souls of the deceased family as long as he lives.

Lastly I have had trouble because in spite of the deafness of my son Bolesław they insisted on calling him to the army. They kept him in the hospital in the fort of Modlin, and wearied him during 6 weeks. I had much to suffer before I succeeded in getting him free. You have no idea what lawless things are going on here, we are so happy that often the living envy the dead. A small star shone for a moment and again clouds are coming [referring to the promises of autonomy made by Russia in 1906].

Do you correspond with anyone from Lipsk? Do you know that they have been permitted to build a church?[1] I was there a year ago, after 30 years. I had hoped to find a little progress and improvement, but I saw with pain that it is worse than it was when we lived there. The glass [drinking] plays the main part there. The backwardness is enormous. I write this letter in Zaremby, where I have been for a week with [my brother] the priest Klemens. Wikcia came also, and Emilia lives here. We come so very seldom together; we are the only sisters since Karolcia left us [died]. . . . .

Your sister [cousin],

MARYA

350 January 28, 1908

DEAR AUGUST: By a very strange and unexpected accident we got news of where you are living in America; up to the present we did not know where to find you. We take advantage of the address we received and without delay we take the pen in order to inform you what is the news with us. But during such a long past and such a long time of our common silence many changes had to come, very sad changes for our family. Our parents are dead, and sister Karolina, the husband of Auntie Misiewicz, both the Żółkiewskis, the husband of my sister Mania, etc. . . . . Only my husband Paweł is alive . . . . and the young generation, which also is getting old. It is very sad that in Lipsk they devote themselves so much to the glass.

[1] The permission to build a (Catholic) church is still difficult to get in Russian Poland, particularly in the east.

he is, you cannot remember all the benefits he has done to people, all the wealth and relationships he has! He is a friend of the first persons in Warsaw and in the whole country! He poses egregiously but evidently he does not know that whoever listens to him, says, "Stupid man!" I like people from my country, but this one does not please me. I will write today about no general questions, because to tell the truth I am very sleepy. It is late already, and during the day I have no time to write because I am preparing to go away next week, or some day. Then there is nothing of importance. About personal questions also much cannot be said. I will write to you at length after getting to Wyżarne; I shall have more time there and my thoughts will be freer. I hope to live for those few weeks, and if it happens otherwise, well, then my parents will inform you that your correspondent has removed from here to eternity. But I confess that, if formerly I wished to die, now such an ending is displeasing for I want to live. It seems that I perceived too late that life is beautiful in spite of all. I am curious whether in dying one has all his presence of mind, whether he understands what is going on at that moment with him and around him. If so, I thank very much [wish to be excused]. I don't wish to die in full consciousness. I cannot imagine what occurs in the head, in the thoughts of the dying person, what he feels and thinks. Do you know, I have the intention of dying with a pen in my hand, namely to write what I feel in those last moments. Of course, if it is possible to do it and if regret for the flying life does not oppress me.

I write as if I were already with one foot in the grave, but it is not so, because I don't even lie in bed, but I walk. I even sew sometimes with the sewing-machine; only this "death" persecutes me, and I cannot write more today, because all my faculties are covered with mourning crape. [Greetings and kisses.]

ZOCHA

352 LIPSK, June 20, 1909

MY DEAR UNCLE: Two weeks have passed already since I left Warsaw, and not until today have I found time to write to you, dear uncle. I had to renew my old acquaintances, and had other obligations also, which did not permit me to do until now what I should have begun with. How is your health, dear uncle and auntie? Are my little cousins in good health, do they play or work? I am curious

The more so as our health is no longer good. Rheumatism especially prevails in our whole family. "Old age is not a joy." The priest Michał is the youngest and he was born in 1863; what shall I say about us older ones? But I must inform you about my children, that Janek is still unmarried but already betrothed, and Jadzia, my daughter, married a student of medicine, so she must work until he completes his medical studies. It is only bad that they must live apart, for he is in Cracow. If there were a [Polish] university in Warsaw it would be much easier for them, and much better to be together. But probably Mania informed you about our family, that three brothers are in Warsaw and sister Wiktoria, who is married. Staś is in Riga in the army, two brothers are priests in their parishes, and two sisters, myself and Mania, are with them. . . . .

[EMILIA]

351 WARSAW, May 12, 1909

MY DEAR, MY BELOVED UNCLE: I received your letter this week. It was so sad that it frightened me and therefore I write directly in order to share my thoughts with you. I regret that I caused you pain without even knowing it. It is true that lately I did not give you any sign of life but believe me, I was so ill that I could not take a pen in hand, and [brother] Wacio is as afraid of writing as a Jew is of water, and moreover nobody can write for me as I write myself. Therefore I did not ask either my other brothers or my parents. I believed that I should die and then my parents would write to you. Meanwhile it has turned out otherwise. I am still alive, I don't know for how long a time. In any case every letter that I write seems to me the last which I can write. Therefore you see, dear uncle, in what a position I am. Please don't wonder if I am late in writing, although I will try to avoid it as much as possible. You don't write whether you are in good health. How are auntie and my cousins doing? I know only that they are working but that is not enough for me. With us there is no news. My parents and brothers are in good health and in the best of spirits. It is always so, only sometimes it changes under the influence of higher forces, but everything ends happily.

I had lately the honor of getting acquainted with our countryman from Lipsk, perhaps you remember him—Mr. Adam Chomiczewski. He deigned to come to us because his cousin Skokowska, who is in Warsaw for treatment, lives with us. You have no idea what a man

"enlightenment," but their voice is a voice calling in the wilderness. The rich and noble are abroad, and only they could do something if they would. And in general people grow indifferent to everything that is Polish and for Poland—not to this brilliant and splendid [Poland] which clinks with its thousands [of roubles], but to this poor, gray, vulgar and stupid [Poland]. What do they care if the children of hired workmen remain poor hired workmen, if for a long time still they will believe that, by charms and curses, illness and different other troubles are chased away? On the contrary, they endeavor to maintain as long as possible this unnatural state, because they know that when there is not a single illiterate, from this moment on the thousands will no more flow so easily as now to their bottomless pockets.

Thence comes this indifference to all exhibitions which have the local industry in view. The rich industrial does not care for such an exhibition, because he will always find a sale for his products, if not here, then elsewhere. And besides, his clients are rich people who imitate what they see abroad. What do they care for local industry? And we poor people, we disregard [this], and do you know why? Because such exhibitions have no practical importance. In America perhaps they are as they ought to be, but with us it is simply a "turning of the head."[1]

Such "turning of the head" is, for instance, our "Association for Knowledge of the Country," to which you wrote once asking what is the object of this Association. If you thought that it is concerned with the question of enriching the country, you erred greatly. They travel through the land, it is true, but for the pleasure of it, not in order to study what is done in this part or the other and what could be done in a given place. They care only for a nice locality, for old ruins of castles, palaces, churches, and nothing more. All this is very nice, but in my opinion it is not the time to do it now; we have so many questions, more important, concerning the present and the future that it is impossible to busy ourselves with the past. So our peasant's reason tells us, which is contrary to the "fine reason of the

[1] The reference is to a provincial exhibition in Częstochowa about which the uncle had probably asked, and which was, in fact, very well organized. But the girl's letters betray a general pessimism, probably the result of her personal condition—not only ill-health and fear of death, but also the disharmony between her general culture and her habitual environment.

how the weather is, and the temperature in America, because here it is bad, not wet, but very cold. Do you know, not all the potatoes have yet come up? The summer will be very late.

I feel worse than bad in my health. It has come so far that while 5 years ago I weighed 148 pounds, now I weigh scarcely 112; it is perhaps the smallest weight that a grown-up person can have. I have little hope of living for a long time, and still less of having the health and strength, which I need so much for work. That is the reason I cannot follow your advice, dear uncle, about long walks. From Wyżarne to Lipsk is 6 versts; to Prolejki, 4 times as far. It is not for my strength to walk so long a way, since if I walk a little through the forest I feel terribly tired. Corsets and narrow shoes I don't wear even in Warsaw, the less so in the country. I take as much sour and sweet milk as I can and everything made from milk. I also eat all vegetables, but what is the use of all this? In the country, indeed, I get better during the summer, and some pounds are added to my weight, but the winter takes all this away and more still. How long will it last, and what kind of illness is it? No doctor can know it. The home remedies, the so-called old woman's remedies, don't bring the desired results either. I try everything that anybody advises me to do, and in vain. Now somebody got the idea that it is a tapeworm, and they gave me some poison; but I fear to use it lest I may poison myself in reality. Death does not let us wait very long for itself; why should I hasten its visit?

In Lipsk I found everything as it has been from old; no changes reach these retired places. If there were not the frequent, too frequent, emigration to America and back, people here could remain for a long time "as in God's house behind the stove" [Proverb: happy and calm] without knowing that there exists a world besides Suwałki, Grodno, Warsaw, and Częstochowa, and that in this world people are more intelligent, richer and better prepared to live. Here it is that those who have money enough sit every day in the tavern—no, it is not a tavern, these belong to the past—but a "restaurant"! Lipsk has been able to do this much for the comfort of its citizens. And those who have not so much money work the whole week in order that they may at least on Sunday "be equal to men" and sit at the same table—or under the same table. Not everybody is like this, but an enormous majority. The cause of all this is the lack of schools, and therefore people who are a little more intelligent cry

KALINOWICZ SERIES

We have here an interesting case of familial solidarity preserved in full strength by the children after the death of their parents, in spite of the usually disintegrating influence of emigration. Affection seems to have grown stronger and has taken the place of the subordination to the head of the family. In this way the moral unity of the group is kept, although there is neither a common economic basis of existence nor any external pressure of the community, and in spite of the fact that the members are separated.

The growth of affection is shown by the exaggerated sentimentality in the letters. The expression of feelings in the peasant is seldom proportionate to their real importance, but, when we find such an exaltation as throughout almost all of the letters of the members of this family, there is certainly a very real intensification of the feelings. There is also a very good opportunity for the familial solidarity to manifest itself in the fact of the marriage of one sister. And, in general, we see this solidarity in its purest form, free from any questions of money, social opinion, etc.

THE FAMILY KALINOWICZ

Władzio (Władysław)	brothers
Leon	
Janek	
Helcia	sisters
Stasia	
Todzia (Teodora)	
Antosia	
Kasia Hulewiczka, cousin	
Bronek, Helcia's husband	
Kasia's husband	
An uncle	

lords," as the Jews say. In America people are more practical, therefore it is better there than here.

Staying in the country annoys me very much, not because I am without occupation—I have enough for my strength—but much time remains which in Warsaw I spent in reading books, and here I have none. I am robbed of this only pleasure that remained, because I like books better than all amusements and plays or society, all visits, etc. In Warsaw I surrounded myself with books like a true bookworm; here I cannot borrow them anywhere, and I am sad. [Greetings and kisses.]

ZOCHA

Write to him, dear Władzio, perhaps you will rejoice him.[1] Dear Władzio, we feel very sad without you. We came home not long ago, and we must go soon again. Such is our sad life, for we are scattered about the world. Now I greet you once more, I embrace you and kiss you thousands of times. Later I will write more. . . . . I remain longing.

Your sister,
TEODORA

I will come soon to you.

355 [SIBERIA] January 25, 1914

DEAR BROTHER: Notwithstanding a long time [spent] in longing and awaiting news from you, I am obliged to write a few words coming from the depths of my heart. Dear brother, it will soon be a year since you left the home, and during this whole year I have longed and wished for news from you, but you have forgotten about me totally. And still you know well how sad I feel and how I long for you. Have you no brotherly feeling? Don't you know how I long for you and want to know about you? Nobody knows what is dear to me, but a brotherly heart is dearest of all, and I cannot find it. You know that I have served 2 years and did not ask you for any help, but I want a brotherly heart and a brotherly love. But I know that the time passes rapidly for a man who lives in liberty and can do his will, and if there is bitterness, there is also sweetness. But I have no sweetness at all, I am like a man in a penitentiary. I want brotherly words, I want a brotherly heart and remembrance. If I knew that I had been ever disagreeable to you when we lived together, I would say, "It is my fault." But I loved you more than my life and I love you still. But you, as soon as you got a little liberty, you forgot about everything. So it is now in the world; a brother stabs his brother, a sister drowns her sister for profit's sake. But please forgive me these words, for I write them in longing and sorrow and desire. I don't see anything pleasant, everything which I love is closed and hidden from me. He who has liberty does not know longing or sorrow, but I know them well. For 2 months already I have had no news from home, neither about my sisters nor about my brothers, so my heart is troubled, although my condition is not worse

[1] The brother-in-law feels himself more or less an intruder in the family until his marriage has been sanctioned by all the brothers and sisters.

353–63, TO WŁADZIO (WŁADYSŁAW) KALINOWICZ, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS

353 [December 5, 1913]

DEAR WŁADZIO: We send you a kind and hearty greeting, we embrace you and kiss you innumerable times and we inform you that, thanks to God, we are in good health, and we wish you also with our whole heart the best of health. Dear brother, after a long waiting and a great longing we received your letter which rejoiced us so much that we wept the whole day from joy that you are alive and from sorrow that perhaps you bear there misery, dear Władzio. Today it is December 5, tomorrow we are going home, and I think to myself, O God, even if I had to work as hard until the next December, or even a year more, I would work gladly, if I could help our dear little brother. But nothing can be done.[1] Dear Władzio, when we remember you, we shed bitter tears and we think that there is nothing more left for us upon this world. I would be glad to go to you, dear Władzio. . . . . Now we finish these few words, we greet you once more, kiss you and embrace you. Perhaps God will comfort us and we shall see one another still. When we get home we will write oftener. . . . .

T[EODORA] and J[ANEK] KALINOWICZ

Now we greet dear Hulewiczka [cousin], with her husband and son.

354 [LĄD, end of January, 1914]

MOST BELOVED WŁADZIO: I, Todzia [Teodora] write to you these few words. First, I greet you with my whole heart, I kiss you and embrace you hundreds of times. Now I inform you first, dear Władzio, about Helcia's wedding. The wedding was performed on January 21, at 7 o'clock in the evening. It was very beautiful, all the lights in the church shone, rugs were spread out and singers sang. But, dear Władzio, all this changed for us into a great sorrow and we all wept, because our most beloved Władzio was not there. Dear Władzio, we feel very sad without you and we long for you. Dear Władzio, write a few words to Bronek, our brother-in-law, for he is always very sad; he imagines that perhaps you are angry with him.

[1] That is, they must go home, for the Polish season-workers are not permitted to stay in Prussia during two winter months, the Prussians fearing that they will settle in the east provinces and strengthen the Polish element there.

357 May 19, 1914

MOST BELOVED BROTHER: . . . . You ask me why I send you letters with stamps, whether I am so rich in money. Well, I don't grudge these 10 copecks. Why, I have 90 roubles—oh, I beg your pardon, 90 copecks—a month. But for this money I can send more letters than my brother-in-law, who has more honor [higher position ?] and more money than I.[1] They wrote to me not long ago, complaining that you don't write to him. He says that he is often in despair, because everybody in our family, particularly the brothers, looks at him with an unfavorable eye. Stasia and Todzia complained also that you wrote seldom to them. I told them to write more often, then they will receive more letters. And why does Helcia not write to Hulewiczka ? I will learn it and inform you. If it is through him [the brother-in-law], I will thank him when I come back. . . . .[2]

LEON

358 LĄD, March 22, 1914

DEAR WŁADZIO: In our first words to you P[raised] b[e] J[esus] Chr[istus]. We hope that you will answer us: "In centuries of centuries, Amen." [Greetings; health.]

Dear Władzio, we have written 4 letters to you and we don't know what happened, for we received an answer to none. We are very much pained that our most beloved brother forgets about us. Dear Władzio, we love you so much, I pray to our Lord God that I may see you at least in a dream, and you have forgotten about us.

Dear Władzio, don't believe Janka that she is faithful to you. She has already Józef Balczak. She bought a ring for him, and she dares to write to you! Pardon me, dearest Władzio, for writing thus to

[1] The brother-in-law is required to become at once a member of the family in the full sense of this membership.

[2] In spite of the extraordinary efforts to preserve the familial solidarity, the brother-in-law is not assimilated, and the sister is estranged; the family not only does not acquire a new member but is in danger of losing one. The family Kalinowicz is not held together by a community of economic or social interests, but merely by affection, and there seems to be no immediate relation of solidarity between it and the family of the brother-in-law, simply because the family Kalinowicz is no longer a complete and organized family-group, and does not count as such in the eyes of the community. A family must either have a head (or rather, a head-couple) or be composed of married, settled, and socially mature members, in order to have a social standing as a group.

than that of others [my companions]. So I beg you very much, dear brother, if somebody tells you that you are alone, spit into his eyes, and remember that you have brothers and sisters who want news from you. You wrote in the beginning and you complained about me, [saying] that it interested you and you wanted to know about my condition, about my success. And you think that I am not interested. But I want very much to know about your health and success, to know where my dear brothers are. So I beg you very much, write me where you are, how do you succeed . . . . for from home they write me nothing about you; they say only that you don't succeed in America. Such is our lot, that we don't succeed anywhere. . . . .

Your brother,

LEON

356 February 11, 1914

MOST BELOVED BROTHER: . . . . Today I had the happiness to receive your letter which caused me a great joy. . . . . When I received it I could not eat my dinner. . . . . You ask me how long I have still to serve. I cannot tell you exactly for I don't know it myself. I was glad that the last year was coming but now I am very sad . . . . for people say that there will be a war with Prussia and Austria and England. . . . . You know what my life is, far away from my dearest brothers and sisters. I cannot complain that the conditions are bad, but what about this slavery? For what am I a slave in these Siberian mountains? . . . . I could be something else than I am [not a simple soldier], but I don't want it, I am weary of life. . . . .

You say that Helcia is getting married. Yes, she asked me for advice [permission], and I advised her also to do it, for I pity her very much, that she remains so alone, while we don't know whether any one of us will ever come back to our beloved Poland and to our beloved sisters and brothers. It seems to me as if I never should tear myself out of this slavery. Your intentions are very serious [probably the brother intends to take his family to America], but don't worry about me as long as I am in service. When I see that things are bad I shall address myself to you, but now for a time I will be patient. The service is easy. [Expression of brotherly feelings; news and request for news about relatives and friends.]

I remain in longing.

Your loving brother,

LEON

festival, is etymologically identical with *wesele*, joy]. I should have much to describe and to complain about, but I pray to God that He may help me to see you and to relate to you everything by words. Dear Władzio, as to America, I want to go there, for it seems to me that now everything will be different at home. Dear Władzio, I should like to get to you as soon as possible, for I long very much. Or you come to us; then everything will be well, for now we are true orphans. . . . . As soon as you receive this letter, answer us and tell me whether I shall prepare myself for America and when, for I should like to as soon as possible. I should regret very much to leave my sisters and all my beloved ones, but what can be done, since we must go asunder for bread and long for one another as now, when we are scattered, everybody elsewhere. Dear Władzio, Helcia wrote and asked me to greet you as well as her beloved Hulewiczka. . . . . All our girls greet you also [enumerates those who work with her]. . . . . I was very glad that you wrote also something to Janek, for he is very arrogant. Excuse me for having written so much and so badly, but to my dear brother I write boldly, for he will accept everything, even if anything is bad. . . . .

S[TASIA], T[EODORA], and J[ANEK] KALINOWICZ

360 [Summer, 1914]

DEAR BROTHER: [Usual beginning; expression of fraternal feelings.] You ask, dear Władzio, about Antosia. She is with Helcia. Up to the present she has nothing to nurse [as Helcia has no child yet], but we don't know how it will be later on. We intended to take her with us, she had even got the passport, only we pitied her, for she is still too young for such heavy work. [Greetings, love and longing expressions, etc.]

Your loving sisters and brother,

STASIA, T[EODORA], and J[ANEK] KALINOWICZ

361 SIBERIA, June 22, 1914

DEAR BROTHER: . . . . My time passes very slowly, I can compare it to that which we all three spent in Linisberg in Germany. I have had no letter from home since Easter. Since Helcia married she has written to me only twice, and Bolek did not write even once. I don't know what it is, whether they have no time because of work,

you, but we have a dear brother and we want to have also a dear sister-in-law, and that is the end of it. I write you nothing but the holy truth. I inform you, most beloved Właczio, that we shall go into the world on March 30. We are very sad that we must wander about the world, but nothing can be helped. God's will be done, let it be so for some time. Dear Władzio, don't be angry with Helcia, she grieves very much that you have not written to her for so long a time. Dear Władzio, Helcia longs much for Hulewiczka, sends her a sincere greeting, kisses her and embraces her thousands of times and begs her to write. Dear Władzio, don't be angry with Helcia for having married. She had nothing else to expect but this Prussian grease [figurative for "season-work;" a particular kind of grease is given to the season-workers for cooking], and we don't like this Prussian grease; we are tired of it. Dear Władzio, Janek is a good-for-nothing, he always plays cards, refuses to listen to anybody, is very vulgar, offends everybody; such a rogue as the world has never seen. Write him a few words, dear Władzio, perhaps you will correct him a little in this way.

Dear Władzio, perhaps you are displeased with me for describing everything thus, but what you don't like, forgive me. I write you the sincere truth, because I love you sincerely. . . . .

I remain your truly loving sister,

TEODORA

359 May 8 [1914]

. . . . DEAR WŁADZIO: Don't be angry with us for writing little to you, for it seems to me that we have written more to you than you, dear brother, to us. Believe me, I never felt so sad at home as this winter. You say, dear Władzio, that we have a brother-in-law now and therefore we forget about you. It is not true, we shall never forget you, for you are our most beloved little brother and we long for you as a deer for water, like earth without rain; and we want to see you as soon as possible. Dear Władzio, if you knew how every letter of yours rejoices us you would write more often, our beloved brother. . . . .

I wrote to you after Helcia's wedding, but I don't know whether you received this letter. I pitied [regretted?] Helcia very much, I cried during the whole festival; the festival was not a festival, but a sorrow for me [play of words, *wesele*, marriage-

accident: one workman was drowned. He was bathing on Sunday, precisely during the divine service.[1] [Relates who died; weather.]

BRONEK

Dear brother, I greet you also and embrace you and beg your pardon for not having answered you at once. I wanted Bronek to write, but he let one day pass after another. If you knew how much he works you would not wonder at all. . . . . He works in Słupca. He leaves at 4 every morning and comes back at 10. He boarded with Felek, paid him 3 roubles a week, but they gave him very miserable living and he had to stop. [News about friends.] I greet you, dear little brother, I embrace you and kiss you a thousand times, and I beg you very much, write often, for we long much for you. . . . . Antosia greets you. She remembers you often and wishes you to come as soon as possible. . . . .

HELCIA

363 [November] 27, 1914

DEAR BROTHER AND DEAR KASIA: After a painful sighing and a terrible longing [on our part] Todzia [Teodora] sent us two letters which rejoiced us very much. Now we inform you that we, although in great fear and waiting for better times to come, are still alive and healthy, and we wish you the same with our whole heart. Now we inform you that God gave us a son. He is named Stanisław Józef. For the first time he greets his dear uncle and aunt Kasia and the other uncle [Kasia's husband] and his cousin. Dear brother, we pity you very much, we remember you often, saying that perhaps you are hungry sometimes, since your condition is so bad . . . . and you have had no work for 6 months. We are very much pained. And how does my dear Kasia succeed? I long very much for her. Dear brother, we have much news, but all is sad. Now I won't write more, for the day is short, and we spend these long evenings in darkness [no oil because of the war].

[HELCIA]

[Longer or shorter greetings from other members of the family, except those who are in Prussia.]

[1] Bathing during the divine service is considered the cause of his drowning—God's punishment.

or since they lay down for the first time to sleep they have not awakened up to the present. Well, I will arouse them when I go back. . . . . I received a letter from Mińsk. They wrote me that uncle is getting married and they invite me to come to them after the end of my service. I have had for a long time the idea of visiting them and of getting acquainted with them, for they are very good people.[1] They always ask whether or not I need anything. But they have not sent me anything up to the present, for my character does not permit me to beg. Everybody knows that I am not earning wages, but in slavery [and they ought to send without asking]. . . . .

LEON

362 LĄD, July 13, 1914

. . . . DEAR WŁADZIO: Your letter found us in good health. [Wishes.] I beg your pardon for not having answered your first letter, but I have no time to write and Helcia does not want to write alone. You were dissatisfied that I did not write. I did not write, it is true, and you were angry with me, it is a fact. But you had no reason. I have more reason [to be angry] but today I beg your pardon for everything. You were dissatisfied with us for not having written to you before our wedding. But you know why we did not write. You did not write to me and therefore I did not write to you.[2] Today I write to you, dear Władzio, and we are very glad that you don't forget about us, and we don't forget about you either. We remember you continually. Now I inform you what is the news here. Wacek is no more with us, because he got totally spoiled. He attempted to violate Mania F. He invited her to his room saying that he would show her the photograph of the young manor-owner; he closed the door with the key and threw her upon the bed. Only she cried very much. With difficulty people forced the door.[3] . . . . There was an

[1] The uncle should become the head of the family after the father's death. We see, indeed, that he shows some interest for his nephews. But his long separation from this branch of the family hinders him from assuming any really active rôle.

[2] From the standpoint of the family-relations, Władzio was perfectly right in being angry, for his permission was probably not asked before his sister's marriage, and it was the brother-in-law's duty to write him first after the marriage.

[3] This Wacek is probably an overseer in the manor. The attempt of violation would hardly ever happen in this form in a village, and in general it is one of the rarest crimes. Here it seems to be the result of the influence of season-emigration (about 25 per cent of the population in this locality emigrate for the summer) and the corresponding loosening of morals.

death, and now the place upon which their farm buildings stand belongs to their uncle.

The family situation is instructive, particularly if we compare it with that of the family Kalinowicz. Here we find also familial affection as the main bond, unifying the young generation after the parents' death. But this bond proves less effective; the situation requires something more. Indeed, there is a farm left—a common basis of the material existence of the family-group as a whole—and therefore the need of a head of the family is much greater than in the Kalinowicz case; there are not only social, but also economic, functions to perform. In such important social events as the introduction of a new member through marriage, even a headless family can act as a whole, as the Kalinowiczs prove, although a perfect economic co-operation in such conditions is impossible. But in the Wickowski family there is nobody to assume the rôle of the head and manager. The brothers are too old to accept the guardianship of an uncle, while none of them is able to take the responsibility himself. The oldest (probably) is Józef, but he is in America. The second, Jan, in normal conditions would be the head, but he is sick and therefore unfit. Stanisław is not yet serious enough, and Antoś is a child. Thus, in spite of the bond of affection, the family is gradually disaggregated as an economic and social unit, because it is unable to act consistently in economic matters and to behave as a sufficiently harmonious whole with regard to the social environment.

THE FAMILY WICKOWSKI

Józef (Józio) Jan Stasiek (Stanisław) Antoś	brothers
Mania R. Helenka	sisters

The letters depict a typical economic situation, resulting partly from certain traditions, partly from recent legal factors. Traditionally the peasant preferred rather to will his farm to one son than to divide it. But it was not a universal custom. In some cases it was more profitable to divide the farm, particularly if the father died before his children were of age to be settled. The development of emigration during the last twenty years brought a new and important change of conditions. A season-emigrant can live and put money aside upon the smallest bit of land and buy later a larger farm, while if he has no land at all he is hopelessly proletarized. Hence division of land becomes an economic necessity. But it is limited by the Russian law: no new farms below six morgs can be created by division. The law was established during the liberation of the serfs, and its intention was to keep an economically strong peasant class, conservative and true to the Russian government, as against the too patriotic and revolutionary nobility. The result was an enormous and continually growing country proletariat, which partly emigrates to America, and we find more and more frequently situations like the one in the present series, where the heirs live upon an undivided property, ruining the farm or quarreling continually.

In the present case there are four brothers and two sisters. One brother, Józef, is in America. One sister, Mania, is married. The other brothers, Jan, Stanisław, and Antoś, and their sister Helenka, live together and keep the farm. The farm was their mother's, and was a part of the farm of their grandfather; part of it belongs to their uncle. A new survey was made after their mother's

port Jan [who is sick] and sow the land as we agree. He is exempted from military service; it costs him about 350 roubles. . . . .

Your loving brother,

STANISŁAW WICKOWSKI

365 April 11 [1914]

. . . . DEAR BROTHER JÓZIO: We inform you about our health. We cannot come to health, and I don't know what will be with us for Antoś is still sick with his leg. . . . . It would be worth while to take him to a doctor, but we always lack money. And I am tortured by this cough which won't leave off. It is difficult to get health, and difficult to die. Miserable is my life, for I see nothing upon this world except misery.

Well, dear Józio, I inform you about our success. Things go on in a various way, not very well, for young people don't know how to manage as well as old people, for one does not want to listen to the other. If mother lived it would be different, and the order at home would be better. Helenka neither sews nor weaves, but wastes her time about cabins [going to neighbors and talking]. And Stasiek does the same. And they would be glad to dress, but they have not money enough. But even so they borrow and buy [clothes]. And the buildings are getting ruined. The roofs are bad. It would be well worth while to transfer them, for even uncle is not satisfied that we don't take the buildings from their place. But what? We cannot do it ourselves, for money is needed for this transferring. [Weather; farm-work.]

You want me to describe all the news. You ask me why Franciszek, the blacksmith, did not answer you. . . . . He intended to write . . . . but now in the spring he has no time. He is not angry at all. Why should he be?

And the Jędrzejskis when they came did not tell anything bad about you. On the contrary they praised you, saying that you work and are parsimonious and don't loaf after girls, as you loafed here in our country after women and girls. Only Franek said that you quarreled with Staś so that it came to fighting. This only I heard from them. . . . .

And now I inform you that Helena S. is marrying immediately after Easter. The wedding was to be at carnival, but I don't know

Mania's husband
Władka, his niece
Stanisław Wickowski, an uncle
His wife
Wacek his son
Zosia, his daughter
Władysław Wickowski, another uncle
Józefa, his wife
Andrzej Wickowski, third uncle
Józef, Franek, Wicek } his sons

364–68, TO JÓZEF (JÓZIO) WICKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS

364 GORZKÓW, March 4, 1914

"Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

[DEAR BROTHER JÓZEF]: . . . . You ask whether Antoś is learning. But we inform you that Antoś is so lazy to learn that there is nobody in the world like him. Neither beating nor begging can help. Although he knows how to read a little, it is very little. Moreover, he is a bad boy, disobedient, tearing his clothes, and difficult to keep at home, for he always loafs about. Uncle's [daughter] Zosia, although nobody compels her to learn, learns well herself because she is willing.

We cannot give now anything to our brother-in-law besides this cow, for we have no money. Perhaps later on. Though we had a few roubles, they have been spent during the carnival. Stasiek spent some money on cigarettes and other things, for he is not very parsimonious. Here he gave a deposit for a suit, there he spent money during a wedding, for Wicek A. married Wiśniewski's daughter and went to live with her; she will have 7 morgs of land. And Józef Lisek bought himself out of the military service [was declared unfit by bribing the doctor] and is at home, but we don't know how much it cost him, for he refuses to tell. Perhaps we shall learn some day, then we will write you. . . . .

[JAN WICKOWSKI]

Now, dear brother, I will write you a few words. Józef A. wants to rent our land if you take me to America. He says that he will sup-

our country now you could marry well enough, if you wished, for my sister from Plaskowice wishes you to come and to marry Władka. [Greetings.]

Your well-wishing brother-in-law and sister,

M. R.

368 Borów, March 28, 1914

. . . . [Dear Nephew]: I am very much pained that you have sent me no letter during 3 years. Why, I wrote you so many letters about every stage of your mother's illness and at last about her death, and you did not even thank me. . . . .

I thank you first for having sent the money to pay me off [his part of the inheritance which up to then had not been divided among the writer, his brother and sister, the latter the nephew's deceased mother]. Now we are at last free of this straitness, everybody has his own property. I won't write you who remained in Gorzków, for you know it yourself. I have sold my land in Gorzków and Tarnogóra and bought 15 morgs here, and I made 400 roubles [personal] debt and pay besides it 36 roubles a year to the bank. I keep 4 head of cattle and one horse for which I gave 90 roubles. Moreover, I had to buy a plow, a harrow, a cart, and so on. I had 24 *kop* of wheat [1 *kopa*=60 sheaves] and now 2½ morgs are sown, and 1½ morgs prepared for potatoes, and so on. Now, as you know, I have some debts, but if our Lord God gives good crops there will be enough to pay the debt. So I would ask you, if you have money, send me about 100 roubles, and I will send you a note; I will write it and sign it and add interest. When you come home and when you want it, I will pay you back. In the same way Andrzej's [sons] Józef, Franek, and Wicek sent 300 roubles to their cousin, and they sent him notes. You ought not to be afraid, for I don't borrow for liquor and cards. If 100 is too much for you, send at least 50. . . . .

Your uncle and aunt,

Władysław and Józefa

why they postponed it. But it will certainly be, for they have already bought wedding-dresses now during Lent. [Other news about marriages and deaths.]

Dear brother Józio, our aunt Stanisławowa [Stanisław's wife] asked me to write you, that you might learn about their [son] Wacek. For he wrote them that he suffers a terrible misery in America and begged his parents to send him money for the journey, saying that if they don't send it he would commit suicide, for he had terrible misery. But they did not send him the money, for they had none. The aunt begs you to help him, either to find some work for him, or to lend him money for the journey, then they will pay you back. The aunt begs you very much.

[JAN WICKOWSKI]

366 June 29, 1914

. . . . DEAR BROTHER: . . . . We farm as we can and we eat what we have. We have not much milk, for we milk only one cow. The other is big with a calf, but perhaps she will calve about the end of this month. . . . .

Wacek will come here on July 1, so he wrote. . . . . Our aunt annoys us about taking our buildings away from their place and says that you should send money for transferring them if you intend to remain for some time still in America. And perhaps you have no intention of coming and farming here at all. Then Stasiek would marry and transfer the buildings. Now he does not know what to do, for to remain together thus is bad. The buildings are getting ruined, and lumber is dearer here every year; now a *sąg* of lumber costs 20 roubles. So decide. Either send the money for transferring the buildings, or come yourself and begin to farm. [News about friends.]

JAN WICKOWSKI

367 ORCHOWICE, June 20, 1914

DEAR BROTHER: [Complaints of his not writing news about farm-work, weather, health, etc.] When you receive this letter from us and when you write to us, write us a few words whether you intend to come now, within a short time, or not. For now many people come from America and say that in America things are bad, and we don't know what is your condition. If you come back to

THE FAMILY SERCZYŃSKI

Two brothers Serczyński in America
Tadeusz (Tadzio) } their brothers
Maryan }
Maryanna (Mania) } their sisters
Anna (Andzia)
Janina
Franciszek Puchalski, Anna's husband
Sławiński, Maryanna's husband

369–72, TO THE BROTHERS SERCZYŃSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS IN POLAND.

369 November 6 [1913]

"Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

And now I write to you, dear brothers, about our condition, and I beg you to have pity upon us, and I beg you to send me [money] for clothes, because we have nothing to put upon us and nothing to eat. They have sold our beds and we have nothing to sleep upon; we must sleep upon the bed of Andzia. [A part of] our bedding is with Sławińska. I have been there more than once asking her to give me this bedding back. But Mania told me to go to service in Słupca; but I told her, "Have you ever been going around from service to service? I won't go to service." And she said that she won't give me the bedding. So advise me, dear brothers, what shall I do, whether I have to go to service or not. I beg you very much, dear brothers, don't forget about us, the orphans, and send us [money] for clothes because they are worn out. The money which you sent, Sławińska took it and refuses to give it back. She told me that there is no money at all, and moreover she beat me. I cried so much that I could not walk. And that letter which Andzia wrote, that you did not answer at all, she wept very much [*sic*]. And now, dear brothers, I have nothing more to write, but I greet you.

Your sister,

JANINA [about 14 years old]

370 CIĄŻEŃ, February 16, 1914

. . . . DEAREST BROTHERS: . . . . I shall describe to you now the pain of my heart which was caused by you, dear brothers. I see today that I am deserted by you, but I am not astonished, because

We have here a third type of situation in which the children are left alone after their parents' death. The legal guardians do not seem to perform their duty conscientiously. The two older brothers are in America. Otherwise it would be their normal function to care for the younger children. So there remain the two married sisters, each of whom wants to take care of the three youngest orphans. It is, of course, their familial duty, but the curious struggle which breaks out between the two married couples discloses other motives besides familial solidarity. There is probably some economic background. The Sławińskis as well as the Puchalskis hope that the brothers who are in America will send money for the children, and keeping the latter may thus prove a good business. Perhaps also Puchalski hopes to win in this way the favor of his brothers-in-law and get a ship-ticket from them for himself. But these considerations are evidently too uncertain and would hardly be a sufficient motive to explain the whole situation. The fundamental reason (besides, in the case of the Puchalskis, some real affection and pity) is the consideration of public opinion. The community will certainly praise the couple which shows its feelings of familial solidarity by keeping the children, and it will no less certainly blame the other couple. And we must add that the popular feeling, always appreciative of familial solidarity, is particularly strong where orphans are concerned.

371 April 24 [1914]

DEAR BROTHER: I write you some words on the anniversary of our loving father. Just a year ago I had the great sorrow. Today our loving father came to me in a dream, and I write you these few words, because I intended not to write to you any more, for I am very much grieved by your views. You listen to what that scoundrel Koniński [=from Konin] writes to you, and you don't believe the truth which I write; but if it is true, the thing which people say now, then you will be persuaded. I heard that you had sent a ship-ticket for Tadeusz, and that he [Puchalski, the brother-in-law from Konin] got it and went to America—that lazy fellow. He had intended to go for a long time but he had no money for the journey. Now he has not been at home for 5 days; he is to sit 4 weeks in a prison. The man who smuggled him through the frontier said that some sort of ship-ticket had come from America and that he [the brother-in-law] was going with this ship-ticket. When I heard it, I sent a boy to Słupca for Tadeusz asking him to come. When he came, I told him how it happened and what people were saying. She [the sister Andzia] got the money-order also and wanted this money-order to be signed [probably by the guardians], but they did not sign. I persuaded Tadeusz to go to her and to ask. . . . . But when Tadeusz went to her dear Andzia [ironically] directly influenced him, and my eyes did not see him again. He went with her to the post-office for money. People say that even if there was no money, but only the ship-ticket, she could have cheated Tadeusz. He [her husband] is perhaps concealed abroad, and she can send him this ship-ticket. If it happens so, then it will be your own fault, because it could have been sent for Tadeusz, but to my address. Did you think that I should bite away a piece of the ticket? I am very much astonished that the thief from Konin has more of your confidence than I.

Now I will tell you also about Maryan. I wrote that he was with me, and he was for 4 weeks. Then Staśkiewicz took him and there he went to school up to the holidays. He came to me at the holidays and was here one day. The next day Janina came three times asking him to go to them. He did not want to go, but [the brother-in-law] himself saw him and asked him positively to go to his house. If he were with me he would go to school again. He [the brother-in-law]

I guess that we are slandered by Sławińska, and you believed her false words. But I call God to be my witness that I have been an open-hearted sister to you, and today I remain with the same heart toward the younger children as I have had toward you. When Sławińska said that these small children ought to be given away to service my heart pained me and I took them to me, I feed them and clothe them. You sent some roubles to Sławińska, I don't know even how much. Say, dear brothers, how ungratefully you reward me! I wrote a letter to you, to which I had no answer at all. Do you remember, dear brothers, how I wanted you to be able to get to America; and now I am not worthy to receive a letter from you. I asked you, as my dear brothers, to give us your advice because my husband intends to go to America. I did not ask you to send him a ship-ticket, because he would go on his own money; he wanted only to come to you. But you are so cold that you don't even deign to give us advice. Oh, believe me, dear brothers, my heart pains me heavily, because for my sisterly love you repay me so ungratefully. We inform you, dear brothers, that we are moving to Konin. I want to place these, our little brothers, because if I let them go from under my care a great misery awaits them, since the family is so careless. If I took three children to me, if I feed them and clothe them, ought they not to have beds on which to sleep? But the beds are with Sławińska, and we are crowded. But the family does not care how the children sleep. So I foresee that if I let them go from under my care misery awaits them. So, dear brothers, I would be very satisfied if you could take Tadeusz the soonest possible to you. We planned so, that if you sent a ticket to Tadzio, and if you advise my husband to come, they would journey together. But you, dear brothers, you are so incited by Sławińska and so lied to by her that you don't dare even to send a letter. But I am astonished that you don't deign to investigate it. You could send a letter to some strange person, then you would learn on which side is the truth. Believe me, dear brothers, you will learn yet on which side the falseness is, because my husband will yet come to America—only not until he places the children well. And when you get acquainted with my husband I hope that you will respect him otherwise than your first brother-in-law, because my husband cares for the children better than their own father did. . . . .

FRANCISZEK [and] ANNA PUCHALSKI

Now I hear, dear brothers, that I shall receive a ship-ticket from you. Oh, what a happiness for me, that I shall be able to see you! Oh, I see, dear brothers, that your brotherly love is not extinguished, since you intend to send me a ship-ticket. I beg you heartily for it. But it will be difficult for me to go alone. Brother-in-law wrote in his former letter to you that he intends to go to America, but you did not answer anything, dear brothers. How agreeable and pleasant it would be if I could go with brother-in-law. . . . . Surely, dear brothers, if you knew Puchalski . . . . you would try to have him in America; but you believe false letters and you think him to be a beast. Dear brothers, when you answer me, send the letter to Słupca, to the name of Smigielski, because brother-in-law is moving to Konin in order to send the younger children to school. . . . .[1]

TADEUSZ SERCZYŃSKI

[1] The letter is evidently largely inspired or dictated by Puchalski.

is showing off with those children. He thought that you would send him 50 roubles every month [for them].

Your loving sister,

MARYANNA

372 April 26, 1914

DEAREST BROTHERS: In the name of God I speak to you with these godly words, "Praised be Jesus Christus!" . . . .

. . . . I am in good health, thanks to God, only I have hard work, because I am an apprentice with a baker, Smigielski, so I must work hard and without pay.

I am obliged to describe to you our situation. After the death of our dear father we remained orphans forever, only our brother-in-law Puchalski, and no one else, cared for us. The guardians rented our land, sold everything in the house, even the furs [sheepskins], after our father's death, and we were left without any support. So the family wanted to give us into service, but brother-in-law Puchalski prevented it and became our father. He is certainly as good as a father, because he found this apprenticeship for me; he clothed me; when winter came, he had his own sheepskin coat made over for me. He feeds and clothes the smaller children, and so we can feel gratitude toward him for being our true guardian and father. If he is falsely slandered, and you believe it you will find it out later. Surely we shall see one another in America soon, and you will learn that he is not like Sławiński.

And now, dear brothers, I send you my brotherly thanks for the 15 roubles which you sent us. Andzia assisted in getting this money from the post. We bought a suit for me which cost 6 roubles, a dress for Janina which cost 4 roubles, a dress for Maryan, 3 roubles; 2 roubles were left, but we are without shoes, so brother-in-law Puchalski adds from his money and will have shoes made for us all. They will cost 10 roubles or more, because shoes are very expensive here. When Janina went to first confession, brother-in-law Puchalski spent more than 12 roubles for her dress. . . . . Did the family take any interest in buying anything? You sent one time some roubles to the address of Sławińska, but we have not been clothed from this money. I am today in an apprenticeship, but they [the appointed guardians] don't think about clothing me, only dear brother-in-law Puchalski comes to see me every week and cares for me.

must therefore fall back on a more general factor of dissolution, and this is found in the fact that the whole young generation here is the second generation of peasants established in a town. (The situation is similar in itself to, although different in its origin from, that in the Borkowski series.) The traditional social elements of the familial organization are lost, and in consequence of this the familial connection is reduced to the elementary and universal relations between individuals—maternal feeling, sexual attraction, friendship, economic calculation. Wherever these factors fail, there is no longer any basis of familial unity. The failure of maternal love brings a break of relations between the mother and Zofia Skrzypek; the failure of sexual attraction leads to the behavior of Fijałkowski, Aleksandra, Rózia; the failure of friendship causes the quarrel between Michał T. and Stasia; the failure of economic solidarity between the stepfather, Dobrowolski, and his wife's family causes his attitude in the matter of the inheritance (in which his wife would have no share) after the death of his wife's first husband. The reason for the lack of traditional elements is the relatively rapid dissolution of the old peasant traditions in country people transplanted into a town and having had no time to adapt themselves to a different set of traditions still alive in a provincial town.

THE FAMILY TERLECKI

Apolonia, widow of Terlecki, by second marriage Dobrowolska
Dobrowolski, her second husband
Michał, her son
Zofia (Zosia) Skrzypek
Stasia (Stanisława) Fijałkowska } her daughters
Aurelia (Lola)
Bronisia (Bronisława, Bronia, Bronka), Michał's wife
Michał Skrzypek, Zofia's husband
His parents
Roman, his brother

The familial situation is rather complicated. The father of the family went many years ago to America and took later his son Michał, to whom these letters are written. Then he died. His wife, Apolonia, married Dobrowolski. Her oldest daughter from the first marriage, Zofia, married Michał Skrzypek; they live with the husband's parents. The second daughter, Stasia, married Fijałkowski and went with his parents and her son Antoś to America. The third, Aurelia, stays with her mother. The latter rents a manorial garden on the estate of the Godlewskis. The familial relations of other members (Rózia, Aleksandra, etc.) cannot be exactly determined.

The disintegration of the family is the most complete which we find in the present collection. There is not a single member of the family who does not quarrel with some other member. This disintegration cannot be completely explained by the emigration and subsequent death of the father, head of the family; we have seen other series in which the death of the parents destroys indeed partly the familial unity, but not the reciprocal affection of the members and a certain solidarity among them. The mother's second marriage evidently brought a new factor of disintegration, but again it does not suffice to explain the actual situation. We should have expected indeed the mother's complete isolation as against a relatively stronger solidarity of the children from the first marriage, as in other similar cases; but the ties of affection between the mother and the children are still perhaps the strongest ties remaining. Moreover, a dissolution of the familial life is marked also in collateral branches of the family (Aleksandra; Rózia). We

will. If you saw how your mother now lives I am sure that you would be very much pained. If you saw the lodging where she lives! Only poles with which the ceiling is supported keep it from falling upon their heads; otherwise they would not know where and when to fly. Lola is going to a laundry, but it does not go on very well because her eye hinders her. Stasia's husband intends to go to America, but the whole misfortune is that he has no money for the journey. Whatever he earns he spends on drinking, and if not on drinking, then on girls. Therefore what he earns is not enough for him, and he is dug [sunk] into debts up to his ears. Fijałkowski is such an orderly man that when he leaves the factory after his work at 6 o'clock in the evening he does not even go home to wash himself. She sees him sometimes the next morning at 2 or 3 after midnight, and if not, then at 7 o'clock in the morning when he is going to the factory. His companion went to America last year; now he is writing letters to him asking him to send a ship-ticket. Then he would go.

Sister [probably cousin] Aleksandra, whose husband is in America —her father [or father-in-law?] cannot manage her at all. He beats her as if she were mud, but all this is of no avail. She became acquainted with a married man who had lived already 16 years with his wife. He left his wife, she left her father and those two children whom she had with her husband. She stole 30 roubles from her father and fled with this peasant.

[Michał and Zofia Skrzypek]

Dear Bronisia and Michał, now I shall write for myself, that I got married, which you know already. The marriage was celebrated on August 15. Up to the present we are with [my husband's] mother, so it is somewhat easier, but I don't know how long it will be so. Meanwhile I won't write you more because I have nothing particular, only I beg you to answer us soon. Then in another letter I will address myself to you with a request. I don't know whether you will refuse me or not, I am not sure of myself [hardly dare to ask].

[Stasia]

374 [No date]

Dear Bronisia and Michał: If you believe that it would be easier for us to live there than in our country and we should not be a burden to you, we should be glad to come nearer to you. But we should like to come all of us. Perhaps we could have there some

Fijałkowski, Stasia's husband
His parents
Antoś, son of Stasia and Fijałkowski
Rózia, Aleksandra, Maurycy, Aleksander } relatives

373

Only don't show it to Roman!

LUBLIN, April 1, 1911

DEAR BRONISIA AND MICHAŁ: We inform you that we are in good health. . . . . We did not write to you for so long a time because . . . . , to tell the truth, we had no time. Because since we bought the linen-press, we have never had time, and when there is no time, there is no head to think about anything else. And now we sold it, because we did not get on well even with it; although we earned a few złoty and sometimes a few roubles, all this means nothing when lodging is expensive . . . . and living is also very expensive here. . . . . And father [Skrzypek] works in a starch-factory. He earns 20 roubles a month, and this can hardly suffice to live, even very modestly. . . . . We heard from mother that Roman is getting on very well, that he earns enough, and on the other hand, we heard that he is tempted and intends to leave his employment because he will get another here in the cement-factory. He ought not to be tempted to come back to the old misery when he is getting on better. He should rather take his wife and children there, because in our country life is very hard for poor people—not for those belly-gods whom the devils won't take. If we knew that it would be easier to live there, we should also risk going ourselves. But we are afraid to do as we once did already when we went beyond Warsaw and lost some hundred roubles, and now it is as difficult to live as after a fire; we must earn back [what we lost]. It is easy to lose but too difficult to come back to the lost fortune. Dear Bronisia and Michał, you write to have your mother learn about the inheritance after your father. But it is in vain, because how can mother learn it? She won't learn it here, evidently, but she must go there [to the village from which the father came], and this old man [stepfather] will give her no money, and your mother has no money of her own. If she had she could go against his

ink [to write about her]; you can guess the rest yourself. In the spring I advised her to move nearer, then she could have earned a living, because 5 women are working steadily with me and I pay them 2 złoty each, and in the spring 8 or 10 worked. But she excused herself on account of caring for her children, and not letting them loaf around uncared for, and meanwhile she amuses herself by receiving guests.

And now, dear brother and sister-in-law [I, your sister write]. I send you my wishes; I should like to see you as soon as possible, but circumstances don't permit it. . . . . Perhaps we shall never see one another until the divine judgment. It is difficult to describe openly what I suffer here. And now I have nothing to write you, only I beg you for a speedy answer, at least this letter will comfort me.

Your truly loving mother,

APOLONIA DOBROWOLSKA

I send you flowers. Answer me as soon as possible, I beg you, don't afflict my aching heart.

And your sister,

A[URELIA] TERLECKA

I have no time to write you more, because it is already midnight, and we must go to the cow which is calving.

376 December 10, 1911

DEAR SON: With the approaching holidays I send you my wishes, whatever you wish yourself from God the Highest, and also to my dear grandchildren. In sending this consecrated wafer I want to see you awake, not in my thoughts and dreams, as I see you very often. And now, dear son, I don't know why you do not answer my letter and prayers. Perhaps something displeased you in it, or perhaps somebody told you false tales again. But I beg you once more, whether she [Stasia] is alive or not, inform me and appease my maternal heart. And if she is alive, divide with her this consecrated wafer in my name. The third month has begun already [since her departure], and I don't know what is going on, because you all abandoned me and perhaps you don't even think how your mother lives in ceaseless labor and moreover in torments. You refuse me even this, that I may receive a few words from you. I wait for your letter as for the best thing, because nobody comes to me any more. I

occupation in a factory, myself, father and mother. We kept that linen-press; it was hard for us. Mother then bought 3 pigs which we kept for 6 months. When they grew up, one died, and we have kept the other 2 since October. Up to the present they cost 34 roubles, and they will give me at the fair 40 roubles. [Another page about the pigs, pig-keeping being now a bad business.] Mr. Dobrowolski [the stepfather] said this, that if he wants to, he can spoil everything that is left after your father. He can write that his wife is from Warsaw and born in Warsaw, because you treat him in your letters as if he were some manor-servant and rascal. You don't know who he is. He is not a first best man, because he was born in Warsaw and baptized in the cathedral of Warsaw. If he does not want you to get anything you won't get anything!

The old Fijałkowskis are trying by all means to sell their house and to go to America in the autumn. . . . .

MICHAŁ SKRZYPEK

375 September 16, 1911

DEAR CHILDREN: With your approaching name-day, dear son and daughter-in-law, I send you wishes. . . . . I don't know why you do not write, whether you are offended because I don't inform you about this property. I have been more than once in the lawyer's office, but I did not find him. But evidently the fortune is best which we earn ourselves. And therefore, dear son, pray to God that you may earn a fortune yourself. I pray for you at every mass. And now, dear children, I inform you that Stasia, with the old Fijałkowskis, is coming to you, in spite of my good advice. She won't listen to me, and perhaps she will regret it, as you do. I beg you very much when she comes to you treat her in a brotherly manner. And now with us there is no news. The crops were abundant, but prices are going up. Bread is 1 copeck a pound dearer, meat costs 15 copecks for a pound of beef, and hogs have got much cheaper, so that it is not worth keeping them, because potatoes cost 2 roubles a *korzec* [about 4 bushels] and in autumn they will go up perhaps up to 3 roubles. As to myself, this year my garden failed, and everything gets on badly with me. I don't know what to begin with, because I don't know whether I shall remain long in this garden; we live worse than dogs in a kennel. . . . . And now I have nothing interesting to write you. As to Rózia, she is not worth the pen and

word to anybody, because even Mr. Czepiński came to me in the garden in order to learn the truth, whether you arrived, because different rumors have been spread. Your thick aunt said that you were sent back and that you live in Rury in a farmer's house. Maurycy came to the garden to learn [the truth] because Stepniak said that Aleksander was drowned. Therefore I beg you, write at least to Czepiński and satisfy his curiosity. I don't feel angry and don't claim anything, although you promised me to write, and different other things. I know that probably you long there for us as we long for you. When you gather much money and there is peace in our country, then come back. . . . .

[Aurelia Terlecka]

378 [1912]

Dear Brother and Sister-in-law: [Usual beginning, health and wishes.] Dear brother, you write me that you would take me to you, but not so that I should suffer misery. But have I a delightful life in my country? I suffer perhaps a worse misery because I must work heavily and I receive no good word, and I hear reproaches for every bit of bread which I eat. Believe me, dear Michał, I would fly I don't know where. Although this is my native country I have no near persons in this country except mother. And even mother is very often harsh to me, and all this through the instigation of our stepfather, from whom I never have a good word. He pours curses upon me, whatever ones exist in that world of God, so that my tears never wait. Formerly at least Stasia was here; I had somebody to whom I could go, complain, comfort myself, but now I have nobody to go to. I won't go to Zosia, because she said that if I came to her she would drive me away with a broom. And still less will I go to my aunt, since she dared to say to my eyes that mother and I will soon sit before the church [beg]. But perhaps God the Highest won't let this come, and her ugly eyes won't see it.

And now, dear brother, you order me to learn. Learning is good. Above all, not everybody can be alike, because if everybody wanted to work easily who would be left for the heavy work?

Dear brother, pity our poor mother and don't afflict her poor heart, lessen her tears, because poor mother weeps continually and expects every day a letter from you. I beg you once more, answer us as soon as possible. And when you write to me, write upon a separate sheet, that it may not be together.

[Aurelia Terlecka]

dropped totally [relations] with the Skrzypeks [daughter and son-in-law] since Stasia left; probably they won't stand behind my threshold any more. And now, dear children, I have nothing important to write you, except that the winter oppressed us early and the old Godlewski [estate-owner] died on December 2. I cannot give you more information, because I could not tear myself away from home for the funeral, although the funeral was on December 6. . . . .

Your loving mother,

DOBROWOLSKA

377 March 25, 1912

DEAR CHILDREN: I received your letter for which I am grateful to you and I thank you for your memory and wishes; only I don't like you to write me so little, upon postcards, because I don't even know whom I have to thank, because nobody's name was signed. Dear son, I beg you only, in the name of everything, to advise me how to do that it may be well, besides criticizing. You know that everything cannot be perfect at once. In the beginning you yourself did not get on so well as you do now. And moreover nobody knows what will happen in our country, because people murmur secretly, and around Lublin kettles are built [metaphor] and people say that the explosion will happen soon, and perhaps we shall also perish. But you know more than we do. [Allusions to the preparation for an Austro-Russian war and for a Polish insurrection, in 1912.]

Dear Bronia, I address myself as a loving mother to you, and I beg you, if Antoś [Stasia's son] is with you, take care of him. Although Michał says that Antoś was educated in a forest, yet he himself, while born in the same Lublin, had more defects, even in his later years, than Antoś has, but he does not remember them. And now he [Michał] did not know that this criticism would be painful to his [Antoś'] grandmother [to me], because this is my most beloved grandson. Although the others are equally dear to me, yet they did not work with me, as he did during his whole days.

[APOLONIA DOBROWOLSKA]

To my sister it is written upon this side [of the sheet]. Dear Stasia, I beg you very much to write me a few words yourself, because I know nothing about you except through the hands of other people. In spite of your promises that you would write you don't keep your

And now, dear Bronka, I address myself to you with this request. As a woman, you have more feeling and experience. I don't say that you should do any detriment to yourself for her sake, but in a given case, in a critical situation, please help her to find some employment or simply some service. I did not want to let her go, but she stubbornly resolved to go, saying that if she is to serve here, she prefers to do it there. And now, dear children, answer everything as soon as possible and inform me whether she is alive and healthy and where she is.

Dear son and daughter-in-law, and my dear grandchildren, I send you my heartiest wishes and kisses, and kiss my Antolek in my name when he comes to you. Did he bring an apple for each of you?

We end already our letter. I [your sister] think that it is enough from me, because I want to sleep. The hour is late. I would write something more but I am afraid to sit longer, because the dogs begin to bark and the pigs to squeal, and I fly to sleep.

Your truly loving mother and sister,

APOLONIA [DOBROWOLSKA and] AURELIA TERLECKA

379 October 22, 1912

DEAR CHILDREN: I received your letter . . . . which caused me a great pleasure, but at the same time a great wound in my heart. Because if you believed such a lie, I will never believe [anything], and I implore you and adjure you by the ashes of your dead father, don't believe it. Although it does not matter much to me, yet I want to know who carried such a false tale to you, because I want to know the truth. All the children are good [dear] alike to a mother. In the same way I have wept for many days for you, particularly when I learned that you wanted to return from the frontier. In the same way I weep now for her and I shall not be comforted soon. In the same way as you did not want to listen to me when I advised you not to leave, so did she also. As always, a good mother would like to press all the children to her bosom, but not all of them will listen. Indeed, as you say, in the second and third years I could possibly not have received all your letters, because my address was not fixed. From the manor I received some letters opened, so anything could happen that I did not receive those letters. But it was not as you write, that Stasia would have taken, torn, and burned those letters, because they were of no consequence to her. She got what she was to get, but you would not have got it, because she received [a legacy] from her godmother. After the death of the latter her godfather put 100 roubles in the bank. If I had learned that you were in so critical a position I would have eaten no bread for a month and given none to the other children, but saved you. But I knew that you went to your father [in America] and that he would not let you be wronged. [The father had died in the meantime.] But you are after all a man and you ought to have more strength and energy, and she is a woman. I don't require from you, dear son, to spend money on her and to make expenses for yourself. Only if she needs it, help her with your advice, as an older brother and a man who has lived there for a longer time. . . . . As to the Skrzypeks, you are free not to write at all, because since Stasia left I have dropped all relations with them, totally, because they stood like a bone in my throat. [Proverb. They annoyed me too much.] She complained also about you that she wrote two letters and you didn't answer, that if she sent you 10 or 15 roubles then you would answer. And perhaps you sent to their address that letter where you complained that you were in such a difficult position?

affection may exist without an obligation of help, and the familial relation still seems to him indissolubly connected with economic solidarity, so he sacrifices the first to get rid of the second. And the sacrifice was not difficult, because of other factors. Helena Brylska was not particularly successful in her adaptation. Apparently she adapted herself rapidly to a certain narrow circle of American life, changed her attitudes just enough to fit this circle, and for the rest, remained stationary. Certainly in important familial problems her attitudes remain traditional, and it seems probable that her estrangement from her children is due, not to an extensive change in her attitudes, but to an element of asperity in her temper and the difficult American conditions which made it impossible for her to prevent her boys from following the natural impulse to vagabondage. (See note to No. 418.) As to Aleksander, except for his rather insignificant economic success he remains completely misadapted, and his familial attitudes do not change at all during the year covered by his letters. They may of course change later.

The facility and range of adaptation depend, not only upon the conditions which the individual finds in his new environment, but also upon the individual himself—upon (1) his practical ability and intelligence and (2) his habits and traditions. We have analyzed the first point in the introduction to the Kanikuła series, and on the second we find data in the present series. Generally speaking, the younger the individual the more rapidly he adapts himself. Children adapt themselves very rapidly, but not always fortunately, as we see in the case of the children of Helena. Franciszek Ołów, who came to America as an elderly man, father of two grown daughters, was unable to adapt himself at all. But in addition to age and its decreasing plasticity the question of the traditions in which the individual grew

These letters show, in a very detailed and varied manner, the influence of emigration upon family life. We see that every individual undergoes a different evolution, but that there are always factors explaining these differences.

In general, emigration, as should be expected, by isolating the individual from the family and from the community, provokes individualization and weakens the control of the primary group; we have found it already in some of the preceding series. But the degrees and varieties of individualization are numerous.

First of all, as we have mentioned in the Introduction, the nature of individualization depends upon the way in which the individual adapts himself to the new conditions. In this respect we find here such instructive differences as those between Adam Raczkowski, Ludwik Wolski, Helena Brylska, and Aleksander Wolski. The first adapted himself rapidly to American life and succeeded without difficulty in attaining a material position, which, when measured by the peasant standard, must have seemed to him almost brilliant. He gradually ceases to consider it his duty to help his family, but he does not break the familial ties, and occasionally—partly from generosity, partly from the desire to manifest his personal importance—responds to the appeals of other members. Ludwik Wolski, who was finally also successful but must have passed through a rather difficult experience before he got his position (the conditions in Russia being unfavorable for the advance of the lower classes), feels the familial ties as a heavy burden and profits from the first opportunity to break them completely. Probably he has not reached the standpoint that familial

social organization on the basis of the middle-class principle, but it still has strength enough to make an individual of the lower class feel at every moment his social inferiority through the infinitely numerous and various details in which the principle of hierarchy has expressed itself during the many centuries of its dominance.

Finally, even within the new social organization mere economic progress is not sufficient to give the individual the full feeling of personal importance, because the new hierarchy is not exclusively based upon economic differences, but, even more, upon differences of intellectual culture.

Now, in America these obstacles do not exist, at least not to such an extent. The individual is isolated almost completely from the family-group. The traditional class-distinctions, even if they exist, are neither old nor important enough to make themselves felt by the lower classes. The new class-organization is based mainly upon economic differences, and thus economic progress seems the only test of individual value. The cultural criteria are developed in particular groups, but do not pervade the society as a whole. Finally, the immigrant has, as a background for his own personality, not only American life, but the life in the old country, and it is the comparison with his own previous condition and the condition of his people at home which makes him feel his personal importance in so strong and exaggerated a way.

Another important problem raised in this series is the relation between parents and children among Polish immigrants in America. The state of things about which Helena so often complains in her letters—the impossibility of controlling the children—is very general, and is probably more serious among the Poles than in any other nationality. While the external factors of emancipation are the same for the children of every race, we must understand exactly

up—how numerous and powerful they were—is certainly very important. The relatively easy adaptation of Adam Raczkowski and Teofil Wolski is evidently due to the fact that their families had never been very united. Raczkowski's mother was dead, his father did not live with his second wife, his older brother and sister were in America. As to Wolski, his parents were probably dead long ago, his brothers separated. Moreover, both Adam and Teofil had served in the army before coming to America, and thus the influence of all the social traditions was more or less weakened. Meanwhile, Aleksander Wolski had always lived in the same village with his parents, and so all the traditional attitudes were strongly implanted in him.

This series, particularly the case of Adam, illustrates also the effect of economic conditions on the expansion and development of the personality. Economic success is one of the main sources of the feeling of personal importance, and therefore this feeling is found almost universally among American immigrants. It develops also in Poland under the same influence. (In the autobiography which forms the third volume of this work we see the ups and downs of the feeling of personal importance as a function of the economic condition of the writer at a given moment.) But, generally speaking, the feeling of personal importance can never develop so rapidly and to such a degree under the influence of a merely economic progress in Poland as it does in America; it is hindered by many social traditions. The social standing of the peasant within the community cannot rise very much through his economic progress if his family does not progress economically at the same time. This limitation partly disappears with the dissolution of the old family, but another tradition is incomparably more difficult for an individual to rid himself of—the old hierarchy of classes. This is more and more supplanted by the new

than a solidarity with the parents as against the younger members of the family. Finally, economic independence comes much earlier than in the old country and makes a revolt always materially easy. On the other hand, the parents' authority ceases also to be controlled, except by the state in the relatively rare cases of a far-going abuse. The traditional measure of its exertion is lost; the parents have no standard of education, since the old social standard is no longer valid and no new one has been appropriated. The natural result is a free play given to individual caprice, excessive indulgence alternating with unreasonable severity. Thus the moral character of parental authority in the eyes of the children is lost.

The immigrant can therefore control his children only if he is able to substitute individual authority for social authority, to base his influence, not upon his position as representative of the group, but upon his personal superiority. But this, of course, requires a higher degree of individual culture, intellectual and moral, than most of the immigrants can muster. The contrary case is more frequent, where the children assume a real or imagined superiority to the parents on account of their higher instruction, their better acquaintance with American ways, etc.

The same problems confront country people moving to a Polish town; there, however, the break in the social control of family life is neither so rapid nor so complete, the change of the young generation is not so radical, and there are often time and opportunity enough to substitute a sufficient amount of individual authority for the lost part of social authority.

the social conditions which make the Poles react differently to these factors. To be sure, the problem is, how far the parents will be able to oppose their authority to the disintegrating influences of the environment, and this depends upon the adaptation of the means of control to the circumstances. In Polish-peasant life this adaptation is sufficient. We have seen in the Introduction that the parental authority finds there its foundation in the whole organization of the family and in the social opinion of the community; the family and the community have a sufficient power of sanction to prevent any revolt of the child and at the same time to hold the parents responsible for any abuse. The parental authority in the eyes of the child seems not only sacred and all-powerful, but also just, and raised above individual caprice.

If we contrast now the conditions at home with those which the emigrants meet in America, we see that a loss of control over the child is inevitable if the parents do not develop new means as substitutes for the old ones. First, there is in America no family in the traditional sense; the married couple and the children are almost completely isolated, and the parental authority has no background. (In a few cases, where many members of the family have settled in the same locality, the control is much stronger.) Again, if there is something equivalent to the community of the old country, i.e., the parish, it is much less closed and concentrated and can hardly have the same influence. Its composition is new, accidental, and changing; moreover, it is composed of various elements, influenced each separately and each somewhat differently by the new environment, and has consequently a rather poor stock of common traditions. Further, the members of the new generation, brought up in this new environment, are more likely to show a solidarity with one another as against the parents

380–445. 380–81, FROM FRANCISZEK RACZKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, TO HIS BROTHER ADAM, IN POLAND; 382–402, FROM FRANCISZEK AND ADAM, IN AMERICA, TO THEIR SISTER TEOFILA WOLSKA, IN POLAND; 403–25, FROM HELENA BRYLSKA-DĄBROWSKA, IN AMERICA, TO HER SISTER TEOFILA WOLSKA, IN POLAND; 426–28, FROM LUDWIK WOLSKI, IN RUSSIA, TO HIS BROTHER ANTONI AND HIS SISTER-IN-LAW TEOFILA, IN POLAND; 429, FROM TEOFILA WOLSKA, WIDOW OF ANTONI WOLSKI, TO LUDWIK WOLSKI; 430–36, FROM ALEKSANDER WOLSKI (NEPHEW OF HELENA), IN AMERICA, TO HIS MOTHER, TEOFILA WOLSKA, IN POLAND; 437–45, FROM TEOFIL WOLSKI, FIRST IN RUSSIA, THEN IN AMERICA, MAINLY TO HIS BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW, IN POLAND

380 ANSONIA, July 10 [1903]

DEAR BROTHER ADAM: [Usual greeting.] I received [your] letter which I answer at once. We are in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and we wish to you the same. Dear brother, you say that I do not answer your letters; I answer every letter. I received from you one letter from the army; then I did not answer, because the address was bad, but I sent money to father and father sent it to you. If you had written a letter directly when you came to father I should have sent you money and you would have got it already. Now it is too late, you would not receive it soon enough. So when you get to the army, write me a good address, Russian or Polish, and then, whenever you need [money] I will send it to you. Write to me in what company and squad and regiment [you serve]. Dear brother, nothing rejoices me more, neither money nor anything, since I have neither dear mother nor father in the world, only you, dear brother.[1] I learned two weeks ago what a death my father died, in

[1] He has two sisters, Teofila Wolska and Helena Brylska. He does not mention the first because of her alleged bad behavior toward their father, but it is difficult to determine why he excludes Helena, and, contrary to custom, uses her family-name, Brylska, as if she were a stranger. They had been quarreling, as we learn from Adam's letters, but are now on relatively good terms, since Franciszek gives her letters from home, as he says at the close of this letter. Normally when relatives quarrel they have no communication while the quarrel lasts, and when it is over they bear no resentment. In the present case the situation is probably to be explained by the isolation of the two family-members. No gradation of

THE FAMILY RACZKOWSKI

Raczkowski, a retired farmer
Wawrzonkowa, his second wife
Franciszek } his sons
Adam
Helena } his daughters
Teofila
Franciszek's wife
Her mother
Helcia } Franciszek's children
Stanisława
Władzia
Mania
Janek
Kostusia
Zofia, Adam's wife
Władek Brylski (deceased), Helena's first husband
Rykaczewski, his cousin
Staś (Stach) } Helena's sons by Brylski
Józiek (Józef)
Maniek (Maryan)
Józef Dąbrowski, Helena's second husband
Their children
Antoni Wolski, Teofila's husband
Olesiek (Aleksander) } his children
Julek
Aniela
Teofil Wolski } Antoni's brothers
Ludwik Wolski
Małgorzata, Ludwik's wife
Bronisława, Antoni's sister
Franciszek Ołów, a cousin of the Raczkowskis

country.[1] You will learn [all] in another letter. Hold out a little, until I bring you to me or until I come myself to you, and then we shall suffer together. Inform me about your health and success, and what kind of winter you have, because we have great cold and snows. I have nothing more to write, I send my good wishes and low bows to brother and to the Wolskis. With respect,

Your brother,

RACZKOWSKI [FRANCISZEK]

Helena Brylska is working and earning well. I beg you, don't refuse me but inform yourself, you Wolskis, or you Adam, what is the news about my wife's mother and how she is, because I don't know what it means. We wrote three letters and we have an answer to none. I request you, let somebody go to mother and tell her that her daughter begged you to get information as to how mother is, and tell me about mother, and what is the news in our country.

382 WILMINGTON, DEL., June 25 [1904]

DEAR SISTER: [Usual greeting to sister and brother-in-law; generalities about health and success.] I am already with my brother, thanks to God and to God's Mother. As to work, I don't hope to work sooner than autumn, because brother also has no work since Christmas and cannot get work, because all factories are stopped and there is no work until they elect the president in autumn. Then perhaps we shall get work. And at present brother has no pleasure in life either, because there are five of them and I make the sixth, and all this means spending money. And you know that when I left you, I had neither clothes nor shirts; so when I came to them, sister-in-law and brother gave me at once clothes of theirs and we all three went to the city and bought clothes, one suit for working days and another for holidays, and everything in the way of clothes. So you can understand that when we bought everything, it cost them about 80 roubles. The watch and the suit for church cost alone 60 roubles.[2] I have nothing more to write, only I bid you goodbye,

[1] This connection of hard times with democratic government is a dogma among the Polish immigrants.

[2] Franciszek R. and Helena Brylska have divided between themselves the expense burden of bringing Adam to America. Helena paid for the ship-ticket, Franciszek supports Adam until he gets work. This is still familial solidarity.

a pigsty, from hunger. Such food—a pot of gruel—under his bed, which people threw away after his death! A good daughter! When father worked and gave away everything he had then he was good. Without a priest and alone he died in a pigsty! Let her expect the same—to die in a pigsty. And let her children in the house not come to her.[1]

Dear brother, if you have no money for the journey, borrow from anybody, and I will send it back to him with thanks. Write to me from whom you borrowed.

When father wrote to me, as he had nothing to eat, I sent [money] to him. Helena Brylska lives two versts away from me, I give her every letter.

I have nothing more to write, I wish you health and good success.

With respect,

BOTH RACZKOWSKIS [FRANCISZEK and WIFE]

381 February 15 [1904]

. . . . DEAR BROTHER ADAM, AND ALSO DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW AND YOUR CHILDREN: We are in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and we wish to you the same.

Now, dear brother, I think well [intentions are good] about you. If work were good you would already be in America. I have had no work for four months now, and I wait for better conditions. If the conditions don't improve by Easter, we will go back to our country, and if they improve and I get work, I will immediately send you a ship-ticket, and you will come. There will probably be hard times in America this year because in the autumn they will elect the president. If the same remains who is now, then all will be well, but if they elect a democrat, then there will be hard times in America, and those who have money enough will go back to their

---

intimacy is possible between two individuals so long as they remain integrate members of the same family; the family relationship demands a certain degree of intimacy; it determines the relation. But in isolation their relation becomes merely personal and admits of any gradation possible between individuals.

[1] The father lived with Teofila Wolska. This false report about his death was sent by his second wife, the writer's stepmother, Wawrzonkowa (cf. letters of Helena Brylska), who evidently hates Teofila. Probably the reason of this hate is that the old man left her and went to live with his daughter.

me one and sent us her photograph when she got married. As soon as I came to America, I saluted her politely. But brother and sister-in-law related to me how she remembered [forgot] her children and how she began to behave as soon as she came to America. And she complained to us that sister-in-law was not good to her! She behaved so that if it had been I, I should not have kept her [in the house] 24 hours. As it was, they were patient and kept her, and brother tried to find work for her. And about her writing letters to Wawrzonkowa [their stepmother] and sending money to her, well, I shall bow to her [to Brylska] more profoundly [I will despise her for it still more] because if Wawrzonkowa were lying under a hedge and if I were passing by, I would ——— kick her, but would not give my hand to her [assist her].[1] [Usual greetings.]

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

385 February 13 [1905]

DEAR SISTER: . . . . And now I inform you that I have very good work. I have been working for 3 months. I have very good and easy work. I earn $8.00 a week. Brother has work also. And as to Brylska, I don't know how she is getting on, and I don't think about her at all. Inform me what is going on in our country, who has come to America and who got married, and what is the talk in our country about revolution and war, because I have paid for a newspaper for a whole year and the paper comes to me twice a week,[2] so they write that in our country there is misery. They say in Warsaw and Petersburg there is a terrible revolution and many people have perished already. As to the money, I cannot help you now,

[1] Adam's behavior toward his sister who had helped him to come to America and had done him no personal wrong seems to be mean ingratitude and would be this if their relation had been merely personal. But Adam evidently occupies not the individual but the familial standpoint. He condemns Brylska impersonally for her alleged lack of familial feelings toward her own children, toward Franciszek and his wife, and from this standpoint the act of solidarity in sending Adam a ship-ticket cannot counterbalance those alleged offenses against the spirit of the family. The familial standpoint becomes still more marked when Adam reproaches Helena for her solidarity with Wawrzonkowa, the stepmother. The latter is for him not only not a member of the family but an element hostile to the family.

[2] This mention, trifling in itself, is a significant expression of the multiplication of contacts which will result in a more and more intense feeling in the man of his own personality, as we shall see in his later letters.

dear sister and brother-in-law. When I get work I won't forget you. Remain with God. Both Raczkowskis with their children send also their bows. I beg you, answer the soonest possible.

[ADAM RACZKOWSKI]

383 August 15, 1904

DEAR SISTER: . . . . And now I write to you a second letter, because when I came to America I wrote you a letter but I have no tidings from you. I don't know what it means, whether you did not write or my letter did not reach you; so please, sister, answer me, and please, sister, tell me what is the news in our country, and whether they have called me to military service or not. And please, sister, tell me what is the news about war in our country. As to the work, we are not working yet, because now they are gathering votes for the new president, so all factories are closed and don't work at all till the president is elected. So when I work I will not forget you, sister dear and brother-in-law. And as to Władkowa [Helena B.] she is earning well and the factory where she works is going well. Władkowa got married [second marriage] on August 17. She married a Pole. And I request you, sister, inform me, how is the weather in our country, and how are the crops, how are you getting on? Here, at the end of July and in the beginning of August we had terrible heat, and rain and thunderstorms. And I request you, sister, greet the Kaliszeskis and their daughter from me. And tell me who reads your letters to you and answers [them]. And I beg you very politely, be so kind and go to Imnielski. Let him give you the address of his daughter Weronika, who is in Warsaw, and send me this address, because I want to write her a letter. And I beg very politely Mr. and Mrs. Imnielski to give me the address of their daughter Weronika. I have nothing more to write, only I send lowest bows to you, sister and brother-in-law, and I salute also Mr. and Mrs. Imnielski and their daughters. Remain with God.

Respectfully,
ADAM RACZKOWSKI

384 September 23, 1904

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received your letter and I thank you heartily for answering me. As to what you write, sister, that I may greet Brylska for you, well, I wrote her three letters and she wrote

And as to the money I will send it to you together with the photograph. And about Brylska I do not know anything; she wrote to me at Easter, and since then I have no tidings whatever.

And now, sister-in-law and brother are speaking to you: Be so kind and learn where is the mother of sister-in-law and with whom she lives. Answer us, and I will tell you more in another letter. [Usual greetings.]

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

387 August 6, 1906

[Printed greetings.]

And now I inform you, dear brother [cousin-in-law], Teofil, that I intended to send you a ship-ticket, but I wrote to an agent and the agent answered me that now it is too late to send a ship-ticket, because a ship-ticket takes at least 5 weeks or 6 weeks to get to our country and now, from September 15, they intend to admit no more emigrants to America. So if I sent you a ticket perhaps you would not get to the water soon enough. Meanwhile, a letter takes at most 15 days to go to our country, so if you wish to come to America, as soon as your receive this letter, get ready at once, take money and leave, so you will perhaps land before September 15. Within this letter you have an order for all steamship-lines enclosed, you can buy a ticket for any ship you wish, because this order was sent to me by the agent. And don't think, dear brother Teofil, that perhaps I don't wish to send you [a ship-ticket]. I wish you to come to America, dear brother, because up to the present I am doing very well here, and I have no intention of going to our country, because in our country I experienced only misery and poverty, and now I live better than a lord in our country. I work my 9 hours and I have peace; I have enough to drink and to dress well, and I have money. I wish you also to come; and on the way to America explain that you are going to a cousin [exactly: brother, son of an uncle]. If they ask you how long I have been in America, say 10 years and married,[1] and bring so much money that after landing you will have at least $10.00 and during the voyage remember not to spend money. From Castle Garden send me a telegram. Then, if they won't admit you, I will get you out from Castle Garden; even if it should cost me $100

[1] This applies to the older brother.

sister. You will excuse me yourself; I did not work for five months, so I owed for living alone $70.00 and for the ship-ticket $50.00 and for the clothes I borrowed $45.00. I still have $109 of debt, but I hope in God that by June I shall get rid of my debt. I request you sister, inform me who married among the young people, which girls got husbands and which boys got wives, and please inform me about Wawrzonkowa.

I have nothing more to write, only I bid farewell to you sister and brother-in-law, and I leave you with respect, and I salute you, Mr. Teacher and Mrs., your wife, and I leave you with respect,

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

386 June 27, 1906

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received your letter on June 26 and I answered you directly on June 27, and I ask you whether you received the money that I sent you or not, because they sent me a receipt from the post-office that you received the money on March 26, and you did not say in your letter that you received the money. So I request you to tell me which month you received the money. And as to the work, I am working in the same factory, and brother also is working in the same factory, where he was working formerly. And as to our country, brother says he will not return, because there is nothing to return for. He has no property there, and it is better for him in America, because in our country he could not even earn enough for a loaf of bread. And I also do not know whether I shall return or not. If I can return then perhaps I shall return some day or other, and if not I don't mind, because I do ten times better in America than in our country. I do better today than brother, because I am alone. As to Borkowianka, I don't know whether she came to America or not, because I sent her neither a ship-ticket nor money. So I beg you, sister, be so kind and learn from the Borkowskis whether she thinks of coming or not, because if she does not come then I will marry in the autumn or during carnival.[1] As to what you write to me about the photograph, I will send you my photograph in August, and brother with the whole family [also].

[1] There is no question of love. There has been mention of Weronika, and probably under the influence of his sister he is thinking of Borkowianka. He simply wants to marry in general. Cf. a similar situation in the Butkowski series.

whom he is? If you see some misery on him, take him to yourself; I will reward you, and I will send you money for his clothes, and you will have still a profit from him, because I pity him; the child is guilty of nothing. Please, sister, write to me how old he is. If someone is coming to America, then write to me, please. Perhaps he could bring him with him to me. I would send either money or a ship-ticket for him and I would take him to me.[1]

Expect another letter from your brother soon. [Usual ending.]

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

389 [June?] 3, 1907

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received your letter on May 29. I received it at same time with Teofil, because on the same day I called on Teofil and I read his letter, and when I came home I received also such a "joyous" letter from you. As to the work, brother is working steadily and since the factory was burned I have had work for a month and for another month I have had no work. During the two years I worked steadily in the same factory I had money, and now I earn hardly enough to live. I am working in the same factory as brother. I do carpenter's work and earn $2.00 a day. The work is good and well paid, but only if you work steadily. May God let me work this year during the summer in that factory and earn at least enough to live. Then by winter I shall have steady work.

This letter, which I received from you, grieved me and brother terribly. Dear sister and brother-in-law, you write to us to hold our hands out to you [help you]. It is true that a misfortune befell you, that a misery from God happened to you, and you have not a piece of bread to put in your mouth at times, but with us also it is not easy. Before we earn that cent in the sweat of our brow and get it into our hands, see here, an expense is waiting for it. I don't need to explain everything to you, because you know yourself what expenses are. But in such misfortune we will not refuse you, and not send you any money, but we will not send it now. We will send it to you on June 15, because we cannot do it sooner. I will not write to you how much until a second letter. Expect a second letter soon after you

[1] Sincere feeling toward the boy, connected probably with a desire to manifest his own superiority over the boy's mother Helena, and to express his personality and magnificence.

I would not allow them to send you back.[1] I have nothing more to write, only I leave you with respect. May God grant it. Amen.

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

388 January 28, 1907

DEAR SISTER: . . . . As to work, I work, but very little, because the factory where we worked with brother was burned on Saturday, January 19, at 7 o'clock in the evening, and brother's carpenter's tools were all burned. He lost $50.00. And now I inform you about my old Miss Borkowska, whom nobody wants. I don't care anything about her—such an old maid! I wrote to her only in jest, because I have in America girls enough and much better than she, and even to them I don't pay compliments. I care as much for her as for an old torn shoe. Today I don't need the favor of anybody except God. May God continue to give me such health as he gives me up to the present day. I don't want the favors of anybody except God. As to Teofil, I don't know what he means, and why he will take to himself such a shepherd's bitch. There is no place in America for her, because in America they don't keep sheep. Does he want to keep sheep, and to breed rams, and to become a shepherd? The stupid, where is his reason, since in America there are girls enough.[2]

As to money, I won't send you any now, because we have expenses ourselves, but I will send you for the holidays some more roubles; you may expect it. You ask, sister, about the children. Will you inform me where is that youngest one, Maryan, and with

[1] Besides a familial feeling and certainly personal attachment, there is much of showing off in Adam's helping Teofil to come, and in this whole letter he is proud of being able to be a benefactor. This is one of the typical attitudes assumed by the peasant when, under the influence of a growing isolation from the old social groups, the claims of solidarity, put forward by the family or the community, cease to be considered as natural and naturally satisfied.

[2] This abuse is evidently the effect of resentment, particularly as the girl seems to have shown a preference for Teofil. (Borkowska is another name for the Borkowianka whom he has previously mentioned.) But it shows mainly the degree of self-conceit which the man has already reached. The feeling of personal importance and exaltation, based on economic success, is here mixed with a feeling of independence, whose source lies probably in the progressive liberation from the bonds of social tradition, including family and traditional attitudes toward marriage, power of the community, and probably also power of the state, which he had experienced during military service. Cf. 391, note.

tell you about myself, how I am doing in America. I have not yet experienced poverty in America; on the contrary, I am my brother's support. But I am tired of walking about unmarried. Although I could give my wife enough to live, still I fear lest poverty should look me in the eyes. Were it not for the money I have put in my brother's house, which he bought, I could do nothing during a year and live with my wife like a lord. But now I postpone it for a longer time. You write to me that I don't answer you. I answer every letter. I sent you a letter on Christmas, on the same day you sent me one, and I don't know whether you received it or not.

I have nothing more to write, only I send you low bows and I remain respectfully,

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

And I ask you for a speedy answer.

May God allow us to live till Easter, and after Easter I will write to you what girl I shall marry, and I will send you a photograph as soon as I leave the altar. My girl is a cousin of my sister-in-law; her mother and my sister-in-law are born sisters. They are persuading me to marry her, but I still doubt whether it will be so.

ADAM RAKOSKI [*sic*]

391 March 2, 1908

DEAR SISTER: . . . . As to Teofil I do not know where he is, because he was with me before Christmas and was out of work then, and he intended to go to the mines. So I don't know whether he went or not, because in mines it is this way: One goes there and finds money, another, death. He wanted to go to the mines, so probably he went, because he has not written to me. As to work, I haven't worked for four weeks. There is no work. Brother still works but is not doing well, because almost all factories are closed. Times are so good in America that people are going begging. As to sister, I don't know anything about her, because she does not write to me, and I do not write to her either. In that [former] letter we asked you to inform us where is the mother of our sister-in-law, and whether she received 20 roubles. Let us know, please, where she is, why she does not write to them.

You advise me to marry Księżakówna. Besides Księżakówna I have others [here] even more stately and I do not bestir myself very

receive this one. I will write also to Teofil in Philadelphia. Inform me whether you have the same horses as when I was there, or other ones; tell me this. And send me the address of sister, because she does not write to me and I have not her address. I have nothing more to write, only I bid you goodbye myself, and brother with his wife and children. And brother's daughter, who came into the world May 21, salutes you. I send low bows to the Imnielskis and to their daughters. Inform me whether Weronika, Imnielski's daughter, got married. Inform me, how are the crops in our country, and what success, and who got married among the young people, and whether my companions came back from the army or not. I leave you with respect and beg for a speedy answer.[1]

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

390 January 24, 1907 [1908]

DEAR SISTER [printed introduction]: We are in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and we wish the same to you—health and good success and everything that you wish for yourself from our Lord God. And now I inform you about work. Work is now very bad. Since Christmas I have worked only three days in the week, and perhaps they will send me away entirely. Brother still works but he expects every day to be sent away. Some works have stopped entirely and some people have nothing more to live on, and the city is feeding some people already. As to sister, I don't know anything, because she doesn't write to me and I don't write to her and we don't know anything about each other, I don't know how she lives and she doesn't know how I live. And as to the cold, we haven't had any cold yet—but it often rains.

And now I beg you, my sister, myself and brother with his wife, to be so gracious and inform us where is the mother of our sister-in-law, whether in Przasnysz or in Bartułty. If you see her ask her, please, whether she received 20 roubles or not. Let her write to us. And inform me who has married among the young people, and whether the daughters of Imnielski have married or not. Dear sister, I will

[1] The whole tone of the letter shows a certain lowering of the feeling of personal importance, to be explained probably by (1) worse economic conditions, (2) a certain revival of old memories, which is shown by the interest manifested in the persons and conditions of the "old country," and which brings the man back to his earlier attitude.

brother also won't go because he has no health, and even if I sent you a ship-ticket that you might come to us it would be difficult for you to come to us, to leave the household and the children, it would be a great ruin for you in the home. But if you wish to come, then come for three months at least. We do not mind the few dollars. The photograph I will send you after Easter certainly—brother with his family and myself. As to marriage, I intend to marry after Easter, but I don't know yet. I cannot find a girl for me. I don't require her to be pretty and rich, but I seek a girl with a good nature. As to fortune, [in my opinion] God has still more than He spent [Proverb].[1]

Inform me how is my mother [stepmother] Wawrzonkowa, and inform me who among the young ones, boys and girls, got married. I have nothing more to write. . . . .

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

393 [Probably summer 1908]

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I don't know what it means, whether you are all dead, that I have no letter from you for three months. I sent you a letter before Easter, and I have no word from you. I request you to answer me. In this letter I tell you nothing, because I have no word from you, only I beg you be so good and go to Bogate, to the church, and when the service is over go to the priest and get my birth-certificate and send it to me, because I will need it presently. I have nothing more to write, only I bid you goodbye. In another letter I will tell you everything.

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

394 January 30 [Probably 1909]

DEAR SISTER: I received every one of your letters, and the letter which you sent to me, and the receipt I received on January 26. You were not to send me the receipt, and now I send you the receipt back. I was in the post-office and I gave them another address. They are searching for that money and they say that you must receive it there, and if you don't receive it, it will be returned to the same

[1] The indifference to dowry which characterizes the immigrant is due mainly to the fact that it is not indispensable here as it was in peasant life—that the man earns more than his old standard of life required. "God has more than He spent," because there are new and unlimited economic possibilities. Evidently also the man in America is not in a position to undertake the routine of selecting and negotiating which is normal at home.

much about them.[1] As to Imnielsczanka [daughter of Imnielski], send her to me, and I will marry her and send you the money for the ship-ticket back.[2] Now is not a very good time to marry, because work is bad and bad times are coming now.

Tell us about your success, how you are getting on. Have you still a debt, or did you pay it off? And please write your letters more distinctly, because I cannot read what you write. All the letters are covered with ink; it is impossible to make out what those letters are. [Usual ending.]

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

392 March 8 [Probably 1908]

. . . . Dear sister, you write me that for a year you received no letter from me. But I sent you three (3) letters and I received no answer till I sent you a fourth letter, and only then I received an answer. And about Teofil I don't know anything. It is a year since he called on me, and then he intended to go to the mines for work. I don't know whether he went there or not, because some three months after he had intended to go there those mines fell in completely, and not a single man got out alive. And moreover there were fire and water which took the rest. So I cannot tell you whether he worked there or not, because if he worked there under the surface then probably he is also lying there in the ruins. And as to sister, I don't know how she is doing, because she doesn't write to me and I don't write to her; I don't know where she is. Sister dear, you write me, "Shall we ever see each other again?" You know yourself that I will not go to our country because I fear the Russian,[3] and

[1] A curious example of an attitude remaining superficially the same while the social background is completely changed. As long as the boy is more a member of a family, the familial dignity requires him not to show too much eagerness in his courtship—to hesitate, really or apparently, to make his choice slowly and from among many girls. When the individual is isolated, we should expect an easier and more rapid decision and more place for personal preferences. And normally this is so. But here the feeling of personal importance takes the place of the demands of familial dignity, and the old behavior is kept up while its psychological factors are quite new.

[2] Compare the careless and protective way in which he speaks about the girl here with the humility used three years before in asking the Imnielskis for the address of their daughter (No. 383).

[3] He would be considered a deserter because he did not go when the reserves were called during the Japanese war.

this sorrow up to the grave. Our Lord God gave us a daughter, Stanisława, who rejoiced our whole household, and our Lord God took her to Him. We buried her on July 1. Today in our home we have room enough, but without her everywhere it is empty. Whenever we look at her clothes, every dress we wet with tears. She came to us as if on a visit, rejoiced us, and went away. She was two years old. Sister dear, if we should tell you about her, a whole newspaper would not be sufficient—how graceful and clever she was. Sister dear, excuse me for not writing you a letter for so long a time. After her death I wished to write a letter, but I could not from sorrow. [To this point written by Adam, but evidently dictated by the older brother, father of the girl.]

As to work, we both have no work since July 1. As to Ołów, you praised him as a carpenter, and as long as he was with brother he worked, but when they sent him alone into a car to work, he stood as stupid as an ass, and yet he was angry and swore when we taught him how to work. He got $2.50 a day. Then he went away from us and got work on July 15 in an iron-foundry. He carts earth with a wheelbarrow. He gets $1.50 a day and works like an ox in America.[1] I am working in a gabbarnia [?]. I get $10.00 a week and work only 5½ days in a week. As to my marriage, I will marry in August. I have a girl from Płock; she came from our country not long ago. She is a poor girl, because she has still about $50.00 of debt that I must pay back for her. As to what you say about money, I will send you some, but not now, because brother spent all his for this funeral and it cost me also some $10.00 or $20.00. In another letter I will tell you more. . . . .

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

397 December 18, 1909

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received your letter on December 15, and I answer this letter, thanking you heartily for answering me. As to work, I have had no work for 2 months, since they had a strike. It means that they do not want to work for the same money, but they want more wages. Perhaps I shall begin to work in February. As to the ship-ticket, I would have sent it to her if she had not married,

[1] Ołów is a cousin of Adam, older and married. He was at first docile, owing to his unfamiliarity with America, but later resented the show of superiority on the part of Adam, particularly as married men are accustomed to a certain deference from the unmarried.

city from which it was sent. It cannot be lost when sent through the post. And if you receive it answer me at once whether you did receive it or not.

As to sister, I don't write to you because I have no word from her at all since the time when you sent me that letter and asked me to send it to sister. Since that time, when I sent that letter, I have had no word from her at all. And as to work, during the whole month of January work is such that we hardly earn enough to live. And as to what you wrote me, that I might send you about 30 roubles for horses, we can speak about that later. I cannot refuse it to you. After Easter I will send you more, but now I cannot, because I intended to marry during the carnival and I spent some money, about $40.00 on account of the wedding, and I gave this up because I did not like the girl. Tell me who has been married among the young people, because one girl wrote two letters to me and I have the wish to bring her to me. She lives near the manor. . . . .

A. R.

395 June 1, 1909

DEAR SISTER: . . . . And now, please, inform me how do you do. As to work, I am working still, but it is hardly enough to live on. All the iron foundries are closed. Poverty in America is getting worse than in our country, living is dear, and generally everything gets dearer. Please, sister, advise me about what I ask, because I had intended to marry in June, but I intend now to go to our country. I think that I shall not be punished severely for going to America. I did not run away from the regiment; they just sent me back to recover. So I went home, but neither father nor mother was alive and I had no property to live on in our country. I had a brother in America, who had been there 10 years. I wrote to him, he sent me a ship-ticket, and I went to America. I think that for anything like this I should not be punished much.

I have nothing more to write, only I bid you goodbye and ask for a speedy answer.

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

396 July 17, 1909

DEAR SISTER: . . . . We received your letter, for which we thank you heartily. And now we inform you about our health and success. Sad is our success dear sister and brother-in-law; we shall not forget

sister and brother-in-law; don't be angry with me. At last I now inform you, that I am married. My wedding was on January 24. I have a wife from the government of Płock, from Sierpc, beyond Mława. And now we send you this letter and the wedding-photograph. I am in this photograph and my wife. After Easter brother will send you also his own with his family. He will send you none now because his wife is not able to go to the photographer. I describe my wedding in another letter. At present I will mention only this, that this wedding cost me $180. The wedding dress alone cost me $30.00, and about the rings and other things I shall not write you. I took her as rich as she walked [having nothing]. I paid $85.00 back for her ship-ticket. In another letter I will tell you everything that is going on in America, and everything in general. I have nothing more to write, only I send you my greetings, I embrace you and kiss you innumerable times, and my wife also salutes sister and brother-in-law, embraces and kisses sister and brother-in-law, and remains with respect, Zofia Raczkowska.

And I ask you for a speedy answer, when you receive the photograph.

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

399 July 25, 1910

DEAR SISTER: . . . . We received your letter on July 21 for which we thank you heartily. And now I inform you that I send you my photograph with my whole family on July 25. Expect it to arrive, and when you receive it, answer whether you received it or not. And I beg you, be so good and send us your photograph, that I may have you at least on the lifeless paper. I request you to answer me and tell me what that Ołów says when he gets home; because he will boast there; so spit in his eyes as you would to a witch.[1] If he came to America again and begged even on his knees he would not get back the work he was doing. When he had work he ought to have held it with his hands and his feet, and in America he could have carried money in a bag on his back [if he had held the

[1] Spitting is primarily an old Slavic counter-charm or spirit-scarer; secondarily, an expression of contempt. The Russians spit after meeting a Russian priest on the street, because meeting a priest, a *pop*, is considered in Russia a bad omen. Since the Russian conquest the Poles have imitated this gesture, but with them it is an expression of contempt, not a counter-charm.

but now I don't want to hear anything about it. You ask me, sister, to send you money. I have some dollars with me, but now I have no work, and I am also looking around me [I am careful] because I do not know what will become of me during the carnival. Perhaps I shall marry, and then I shall need money myself. As to those several hundred dollars that I have with brother, on that house which he bought, he will not give them back at once because he has no money now. And as to the money that you gave to Ołów, he did not tell me anything about it. Let me know how much money he got from you, because Tryc wrote to him also about money, asking him to send back what he borrowed from Tryc. You write, sister, that people repay you with wrong for your goodness and that therefore you will be ruined. If you [think that you] got ruined through me, through what I have taken from you, then calculate how much I owe you and for what, and I will send it to you, even if it is two hundred dollars, but don't blame me.[1] As to the photograph, I will send it to you after the New Year. And as to sister, she does not write to me and I do not write to her either; I do not even know where she is. And now you write, sister, that Olesiek [Aleksander] intends to come to America in the spring. Well, you can send him if he is a good carpenter or blacksmith or handworker of any kind. Then he can find work and good money. But if he knows only farm-labor, then let him work on his farm; he will be better off. You have already sent us one and we have too much of this one "well-trained" carpenter. Don't be angry with me, dear sister, for answering you with those words, but people come from our land to America and say that you are not in such misery as you write to me. I don't forget you yet I will send you some dollars some day or other. Answer me, did Weronika Imnielsczanka marry or not? I want to know it. . . . .

ADAM RACZKOWSKI

398 February 25, 1910

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received your letter on Christmas, but I did not answer you at once, because I intended to marry, and therefore I waited with the letter, even too long. Excuse me, dear

[1] There is a traditional fear of blame, especially from a person wronged, connected on one hand with the dependence of the individual upon social opinion, on the other hand with the idea of a harmful magical influence in words expressing ill-will. At the same time we have here also the feeling of personal importance as background of generosity.

[begs] my favor.[1] As to health, brother, with his wife and children, is in good health enough and is working, and I, with my wife and child, am in good enough health, and I have good success, but I don't know how God will help me further. As to our meeting, if you wish, sister, to see us, you can. Neither myself nor brother will go to our country, but you can come. And when you answer us then we will tell you more. . . . .[2]

Your brothers, loving you,

ADAM and FRANCISZEK RACZKOWSKI

401 May 6, 1912[3]

In the first words of our letter we speak to you, dear sister . . . . [Usual greetings and wishes.] We received a letter from you on May 5, because of which we wrung our hands that such a misfortune happened to you. Your write, sister, that we don't write letters to you. We wrote to you some letters, but to none we received any answer. When Ołów went home, brother sent you at once his photograph with his whole family, and a letter, and we received from you no answer. Did you receive the photograph and the letter, or not? Why should we write to you, since you don't answer?

You wrote to us, sister, that Ołów was coming to America to us, that we should meet him as our brother. We did it at your request; we gave him what a brother could expect from a brother. And how did he pay us back for our goodness? I asked him to come to my wedding, he did not come. Brother invited him to a christening. He did not come then either.[4] He went away to our country, and he did not even come to bid us farewell. When he intended to go to our country brother asked him to come and bid us farewell, and said he would give him a gift for our sister; and brother bought a gold

[1] Pride in this situation would be foreign to the peasant in the old country. There the young expect help from the old for a time. The element of pride here expressed is another factor in the waiving of the dowry in America.

[2] The letter is very cold for a letter of condolence. The coldness is partly an intentional reaction to the fact that the sister did not write for so long a time and thus almost broke the familial relation.

[3] This is the letter referred to in the last as sent on the same date.

[4] This neglect is in itself a great offense to familial and individual honor, but in addition, the man who assists at a wedding or a christening is traditionally obliged to contribute to the "collection," and not to come is a proof of stinginess or hostility.

work], but not so in our country. As to the work, I have work, because this factory where I am working will not stop at all during this year, but I will stop work now at least for a month, because I am tired of work. As to brother, in the beginning he did not do very well, but now everything is going very well with him. His wife keeps 8 persons boarding in her home and he earns $2.50 a day. He does piece-work. In the autumn I shall take him with me, and let him learn the same work I am doing, and he will also earn well. As to the weather, up to the present it is very good with us, there are frequent showers and thunderstorms. The heat is not very great.

And now I only name [enumerate] my family: My oldest [daughter] Helcia, Władzia, Mania, Janek, and Kostusia, my youngest. [Usual ending.]

FRANCISZEK RACZKOWSKI

400 May 6, 1912

DEAR SISTER: . . . . We received your letter, which afflicted us very much. We learned about the misfortune that befell you, and we send you two letters together, one registered and the other an ordinary one. For two years we did not receive any letter from you, and only now we have received one through Helena and we learned about your trouble. We don't know for what reason you did not write to us. It seems to us that we did not do you any wrong. Why did you not write to us for so long a time? Why did you not even inform us when brother-in-law was sick? We spoke every day about you both. Why do you not write to us? We wrote to you more than a dozen letters and did not receive any answer. It was perhaps that humpbacked fellow who slandered us to you. If so, it is not our fault, sister, that you listened to his words and don't write. If we behave so, sister, and if we listen to such scoundrels, death will take us all and we shall not know anything about one another. When I married my wife had a brother, a scoundrel like Ołów. When marrying I paid to that brother $50.00 for her, for her ship-ticket; later on I paid him $30.00 more. I gave him back $80.00 for her ship-ticket, and he claimed $35.00 more, saying that I owed it to him. We had a lawsuit, which God helped me to win, and today he needs my favors, not I his. Now I let wife's mother come from the old country; she is with me, and today her whole family calls on me and

I do not know what is the matter, whether I am getting consumption, because I look very sick, and I do not know myself what is the matter. And please inform us where is Teofil, because we don't know about him. Send us his address. Dear sister, if we had to describe to you our troubles, we should have to write you five letters at least. . . . .

ADAM and FRANCISZEK RACZKOWSKI

403 UNION CITY, CONN., October 26 [1902]

"Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

DEAREST SISTER: I received your letter, for which I thank you kindly and heartily. And now I inform you [generalities about health]. I inform you that I am not with my brother, because I could not get work there, so I left that [city], but I did not go far away; so we can see each other. And now I ask you, my dear [ones], to answer me, because I am very curious to know how that happened, whether a lawyer defended our suit, or whether they judged it themselves, and whether they called me as a witness or not. I beg you, dear sister and brother-in-law, inform me about all this, because I am very curious, and I will reward you soon for everything, so I hope in God.[1] And as to what brother wrote about my intention to marry—I will not marry, I will never marry such a scoundrel, let him—with all his fortune. As to my children, I beg you all, you know yourself what, because I am a mother and my heart pains me. I will pay you back everything, that you spend; may they only not suffer any wrong.[2] And I beg you, inform me whether father received those 30 roubles which I sent him or not, because I have no word at all. Did Bukoski give you back the umbrella that I took from home because I sent it back from the frontier? If you wish, give the fur [sheepskin cloak] back to Helena [illegible name]—just as you will. I have nothing more to write, only I send you my lowest bows.

Your truly loving sister,

HELENA BRYLSKA

May God grant it. Amen.

[1] The lawsuit is about a farm left after the death of Rykaczewski, a relative of Helena's first husband, and her children are entitled to it.

[2] Helena, after the death of her first husband Brylski, went to America, leaving her three boys temporarily with her sister Teofila Wolska.

ring for you and intended to hand it over to him that he might give it to you when he arrived in our country. But he went away, and we did not even know when; he only said to people that he came to us to get some money that we owed him! Sister, when he tells you about us don't believe him, because he is a first-rate liar—this Prussian gooseman! In our home somebody recognized him as the same man with whom he had driven geese to Prussia. Then he was so angry that he seized a whip, but the other still said that it was true.

Write to us, sister, did you receive the photograph of brother or not, because if you did not receive it we will send you another. And you can write letters to us as often as every week; we will answer every letter. We send you two letters [one] registered, so if you do not receive this letter, you will receive the registered one. And describe to us how long he was sick, and what he died of, and how did he safeguard you with that property, and tell us how old are your oldest and your youngest. Do you intend to farm yourself or to rent? We request you, answer us about everything. Answer us the soonest possible.

[ADAM and FRANCISZEK RACZKOWSKI]

402 November 28 [1912]

. . . . DEAR SISTER: You write to us and ask us to send you a ship-ticket for your boy. We advise you to let him wait until spring, because it is not certain how work will be in the spring for now they have elected a democrat president and when a democrat is president everybody expects misery to come. Let him wait until March, because only from March on this president will begin to govern, and we shall see how work goes when he governs, whether well or ill. Now work is bad. Brother worked for 9 years in the same factory, and this year he has not worked since spring, because work is stopping. We neither advise you nor dissuade. Sister intends to send him a ship-ticket.[1] If he suffers misery he will not complain about us. We also would send him a ship-ticket very gladly but we have also hard times. Brother has work but it is not even sufficient for him to live on, and as to myself, my health is completely broken. During November I am not working at all, because I am sick and sit at home.

[1] The personal feelings of women are never so completely subordinated to the forms of social solidarity as are those of the men, and on the disintegration of a family the individual affection of women is less likely to disappear than the group-solidarity of the men.

405 July 8, 1903

. . . . Dear Sister and Brother-in-law: I inform you that I received your letter on July 6, which found me in good health, and for which I thank you very much. Now, dear sister, I am very much astonished at your writing that I do not write letters to you. I do write letters, I have always written to you all, and I also wrote two letters to you, dear sister, and now you tell me that I don't write letters to you. Dear sister, you write to me that you wept over that letter which I wrote to you, but I had to write so, because I wept myself also heartily when I received such a letter [from stepmother], because my heart pained me very much. It is not true that I believe mother in everything; I understand everything myself; you don't need to write me this; I have some sense myself. But why do you [plural] grieve me with such letters? Instead of rejoicing after receiving a letter, one must grieve.

And now, dear sister, I heard from Niedźwiecki of Przasmysz that this land left by Rykaczewski is lying fallow. I beg you, get advice from the lawyer Cybulski what to do with it, whether to rent it, because if it lies so for some time the government will take it for taxes and you will have nothing from it. . . . .

Your well-wishing sister, with respect,

Helena Brylska

406 July 13, 1903

. . . . And now, dear sister, I beg your pardon, don't be angry with me, for writing you such a letter. It is not my fault, if I received a letter from our country and very bad things were written in it. Then out of impatience and sorrow I wrote to you, dear sister, a letter which was also bad. And about the photograph I wrote because of not sending it to you, but I wrote also that if you wished you could take one. You write, dear sister, that you did not see the

---

no necessity of using strong words. This explains, for example, the apparently trifling causes of many offenses and enmities. The slightest innuendo means very much when the feeling of measure in expression is traditionally developed. We must also take into consideration the general dependence of thought and feeling upon words, which has been mentioned elsewhere. The proportion is lost completely whenever the peasant gets into a new set of interests and attitudes whose expression has not been determined for him traditionally. Cf. Vol. I, Introduction to the Peasant Letter.

404 June 7, 1903

Now I, your sister H. Brylska, write to you, dear sister. [Usual greetings and wishes, printed.]

And now, dear sister, I have been informed about the death of our beloved father, that he ended his temporal life, and that he had such nursing, that he even had no place with you d[ear] sister, in your house, but you turned him out into the pigsty, and there our beloved father ended his life without confession and without the Holy Sacraments. So have you paid him [dear] sister, for the bloody sweat that he shed, caring for us that we might not suffer hunger and that vermin might not eat us. And you did not even know, d[ear] sister, when father ended his temporal life. You cursed me, d[ear] sister, because father asked me for a letter, and I did not get any letter [from him]. I wrote 3 letters [to him] and had no answer. So now perhaps I will not return again to our country, because I have nobody to return to. I sent 2 photographs, one for mother and the other—if you will and have the wish, you can take it. And I inform you, d[ear] sister, that I send money for the holy mass to the memory of father and mother and of my husband and the remaining money for my children's dresses.

I have nothing more to write, only I salute you and greet you kindly and heartily. May God grant it. Amen.

Your sincerely well-wishing sister,

H. Brylska

I ask for an answer.[1]

[1] This letter practically breaks off the relation because of Teofila's supposed behavior toward their father. Two points are essential in this respect: Helena's saying that she had no longer anyone to return to in the old country, and the manner in which she puts the question of the photograph. The form of the beginning and ending is in striking contrast with the real content of the letter. The generally moderate style is perhaps partly due to the fact that Helena's children are with her sister and she fears to make her too angry, but at the same time it is traditional. We have not a single really violent letter in our whole collection of family-letters, while among the letters written to the papers, particularly in America, there are many excessively violent ones. And in general, hard swearing and violent expressions are much more seldom found among the peasants than among the lower city classes. This fact seems due to the particularly strong and refined feeling of the value of words which we find among peasants, and which results evidently from the fixed character of expressions in all those social relations which are organized by tradition. Within such a fixed philological system the slightest shading of an expression is immediately felt and reacted upon; there is

receive no answer. Tell me about this Staś Brylski who married Wiśniewska, whether you were at the wedding and how are they? I send to you and to my sons my kindest salutations. Are my sons in good health?

With respect,
HELENA BRYLSKA

408 April 8 [1904]

. . . . DEAR SISTER: I am working in the same place where I was working, and I live nearer the factory, so my address will be different. I have sent you money, 20 roubles, and I have no word whether you received it or not. I don't know what it means. I have sent a ship-ticket for brother [Adam] and I don't know either what it means that I have no word. Has he left already or not? What does it mean that you don't answer me? Since Christmas I have no word from you. What does it mean? Are you angry with me? I don't know what is going on, whether you got angry, or you don't wish to write to me, or perhaps the address is bad? I beg you, dear sister, inform me about my children, because I think about them very much and I long for them more than in the beginning, because here in America there are rumors that there is war in our country.[1] We know from the papers; papers come every day and we know about everything. Answer me, dear sister and brother-in-law, about your health and success, tell me about everything, whether good or bad, because brother now is far away from me, he went to his wife's family. The ticket in one direction costs $7.00 and the second [brother], if he left for America, I shall not see him either, because he had a ship-ticket bought to them.[2] Perhaps I shall go to them in about half a year. . . . .

HELENA BRYLSKA

[1] The reason of the growing longing is probably not the one given. We see the longing growing continually until the children come, without reference to any question of war or any other cause of anxiety. In the beginning the relative novelty of the practical situation in which she found herself and the necessity of adapting herself to the new conditions left no place for remembrance and sentiment. The more settled the situation becomes, the more normal the life, the greater the margin left for representation of the past and dreams of the future. And we see from many examples that for the fundamentally practical peasant type recollection is essential to the arousing of a pure sentiment, and how much isolation from the disturbances of practical life this recollection requires. Cf. Introduction: "Theoretic and Aesthetic Interests."

[2] The longing is not only for the children, but for the family and the old country in general. She begins to feel lonely.

way before you out of this sorrow. I believe you, dear sister, because I suffered the same when I received that letter from our country.[1] So I believe you, dear sister, but I can do nothing. I am not guilty. Pardon me all this, I will not write you such letters any more. Forget, dear sister, about all that has happened; let us forget about it and live as we lived.

And I beg you, dear sister, take care of my children and inform me about everything. I will remember you also.[2]

Your sincerely well-wishing sister,

HELENA BRYLSKA

In another letter I will tell you more.

407 March 3 [1904]

[DEAR BROTHER ADAM]: . . . . I received from you the letter in which you wrote about the ship-ticket, so I gave money to brother and asked him to send you [the ticket], because I was ill and I could not. If brother did not send it to you then perhaps sister will give you money for the journey. If she does not then wait a little; perhaps brother will send you the ticket; because I gave him money to send [it] to you. And when you leave go to brother in Ancona, and when you travel say everywhere the same—that you are going to your brother. On the way to Iłłowo wear clothes which you can throw away when they disinfect them, and take good clothes in a valise, because they do not disinfect clean clothes. To live on, take some smoked meat and dry cheese, and try hard to cross the frontier, because if they catch you they will consider you as a deserter and will take you directly to the war; for we have bad tidings, we receive newspapers every day which say there is a great war and many people perish on the water, because ships are wrecked. At the end of April and the beginning of May there will be a great war because Warsaw collected more than a dozen millions for war. And with us it is also bad. We have no work, for there is none anywhere.

And now I write to you, dear sister, that I have sent you 20 roubles. Buy for the children what you think necessary. Are you angry with me, that you don't write? I have written and

[1] She seems to consider her own pain as a kind of a compensation for the pain which she caused, even if the first was not brought upon her by the same person. (See also preceding letter.) This is a very frequent attitude and probably purely naïve, but possibly influenced by the Christian idea of suffering as objectively valuable and propitiating.

[2] "Remember" usually means "send money."

411 December 20 [1904?]

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received a letter, dear sister, from you, and a scapulary, a little cross and a [sacred] picture. I thank you very much for these tokens. Now, dear sister, I sent you 20 roubles for my children for clothes. You asked me to send a ship-ticket for them, and said you would bring them. So we send a ship-ticket for the two [older] boys, and you will bring them. Meanwhile, dear sister, I send you this letter [saying] that I sent some money for the children. You will have the ship-ticket soon. Some days after this letter you will receive another letter [saying] for what ship the ship-ticket is sent. Prepare them as best you can and care for them as for your own children. When you write me a letter, I will send more money for them. Add the remainder, what you think necessary, and I will give you back everything, because I did not expect that all this would happen so soon. Please bring me a large shawl. I have nothing more to write. I send low bows. In another letter I will tell you everything, how it ought to be and how you ought to behave on the way, but now I only inform you that the ship-tickets are sent.

Please answer me, how you think [about it].

With respect,

HELENA BRYLSKA

412 December 31 [1904?]

DEAR SISTER: . . . . I have already sent ship-tickets for Józio and Staś. Let the person who comes with them buy a ticket for herself on the same ship for which this ticket is sent. She can say that she must take care of the children and go with them on the same ship.

The ship-ticket is paid from Iłłowo up to my house; no need to pay anything anywhere for my children. Dear brother-in-law, when you leave if you have any baggage, I mean any large trunk or large bag, you can give it up, but don't give it into anybody's hands without a receipt. If you have a receipt the baggage will not be lost. Until you take the steamer there will be a receipt for baggage with the ship-ticket or written on the ship-ticket, and when you leave the steamer they will take those receipts and give iron ones. Without an iron receipt don't give up your baggage, because it would be lost,

409 [No date]

. . . . DEAR SISTER: You ask me to send you money. I answer, that now I can send none, because the factories are going bankrupt; it means they are stopping work. So I fear that if I send money home and the factories stop I shall remain without work and without money. I shall see later on; perhaps I shall send you some when work gets better. I work in the same factory. And now I salute you, dear brother, and I request you not to send your photograph. I know you well, and why should you spend money? Buy yourself rather something else. And now you write me that you receive few letters from me; but I write letters to you very often. And now I beg you, dear sister and brother-in-law, send my children to school, and let their eyes be rubbed.[1] . . . .

HELENA BRYLSKA

410 November 5, 1904

DEAR SISTER: . . . . This is the fifth letter that I am writing and I have no word. I don't know what it means, whether you are angry, or what else? For me it is so difficult to write letters, and I have no time, and still I write to you, and you who have more time, do you find it so difficult to write an answer? I beg you very much, answer me, whether good or bad. I beg your pardon, perhaps you will be offended by this that I write, but, dear sister and brother-in-law, don't wonder, because I expect with impatience a letter from you every day.

And please, inform me about my children, how are they? I should like to bring the oldest boy to me, so please, answer me, whether I may bring him to me. I beg you, dear sister and brother-in-law, answer me the soonest possible, in order that I may know what course to take. . . . .

HELENA BRYLSKA

[1] As after sleep, so that they may see clearly. This is a very good expression of the peasant woman's attitude toward learning, when this is appreciative. Instruction is good because it makes brighter in a general way, not because it makes more fit for any practical purpose. It is perhaps the consequence of the fact that the appreciation of women is in general more subjective, bearing on the personality, rather than objective, bearing on work. At the same time the peasant man often shares the same attitude, which was, indeed, our own former attitude toward "academic culture," the "polished man," and the girls' "finishing school."

414 April 5 [1905?]

. . . . Dear Sister and Brother-in-law: We are both in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and we wish you the same. I received the letter, and Adam wrote to me and told me that when he has money he will send it [to you] for now he can scarcely earn for his living. I wrote to him that he might come to me, and he did not come. I also don't send you money, because I was ill. I spent much money and I don't work; I cannot.

As to the children, there is Fadajeski from Dobrzankowo coming with his daughter. They could bring them, because we are living quite near to the Sadłowskis, and they wrote to the Sadłowskis that they will go to them. I know everything, because I am living quite near to the Sadłowskis. Jazoski from Leszno is coming also, so he wrote to Smigłowski and he could also bring them. If not the one then the other, because they are all coming to this city where I am living. I long terribly for the children; almost every day I look out to see if they are not coming. My dear sister and brother-in-law, let either the one or the other bring me my children; I know exactly [that they are coming to America]. Perhaps you will not give them all up. Then send me at least one of them through somebody, because I long for them terribly. I have nothing more to write, only I bow to you, my sister and brother-in-law, and to your children, and I kiss my children and I bow to them and I wish them every happiness. I beg you, dearest, take care of my children as of your own, because I don't know either what is happening to them or what will become of me. I am longing so terribly for them.

Dear sister and brother-in-law, if you cannot send them all, send at least one of them, the older, and if you can, I beg you send me them all. If you wish, you can do it, because many people are coming to America, to this city where I am, and I know they would bring the children to me.

I request you, write to me about the [step]mother, how does she do. Is she alone or with her sons?

With respect,
Both Dąbrowskis

415 June 12 [1905?]

. . . . My dear Sister: I wrote a letter and I have no answer. I don't know what it means, whether you are angry or you don't wish to write letters to me at all? Perhaps you are angry, because I

and that would be a pity, as when mine was lost. And give everywhere the same names, that there may not be any trouble about names. Please, if you come, bring me a large shawl, and bring a stone against hernia. Try to buy it somewhere in a pharmacy or to get it from somebody, because here such a stone does not exist at all, and it is almost as necessary as the eye in the head. If the person who brings the children spends some more money on them, let her tell me or write to me on arrival; I will at once give or send everything back, with my thanks. Prepare them as well as you can, as your own, that everything may be well. . . . .

HELENA BRYLSKA

413 January 23, 1905

. . . . DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW: We received your letter this month and we answer you at once, and we answer your request. You ask for a ship-ticket for brother-in-law Wolski and for the children. But I cannot satisfy all this. I wish with my whole heart and soul I could bring my children to me, but nothing is to be done. I could economize for [the ticket of] the children, but so much I cannot. We wrote to you in our last letter that we sent a ship-ticket for the children, but it was a mistake, because a ship-ticket cannot be sent for children alone; it is necessary to send one for an older person also. And so I cannot. This money which was intended for the ship-ticket was sent in the name of brother-in-law Wolski; there are 78 roubles. This [is to be used] if it is possible to send the children with somebody. And if it is impossible then, perhaps later on, if our Lord God helps us, we will send more, either money or a ship-ticket for brother-in-law, for now we cannot. And further, you ask about brother Adam. I don't know much about him because I did not see him at all with my eyes; he went to our older brother Franciszek and they are there together. And about me, for my goodness [in sending him a ticket] he does not mind much, because when he wrote me a letter, I wept. He thanked me for my goodness by not calling me sister, but madam. And how is he doing, I don't know. [Usual ending, with greetings for all relatives and acquaintances "without exception."]

HELENA and JÓZEF DĄBROWSKI[1]

[1] If there is an earlier mention of Helena's second marriage the letter containing it is missing from our series.

417 April 19 [1907?]

. . . . You write, dear sister, that Józiek is ill with his eyes. It would be terribly painful for me if you should not send him, dear sister. And [their step]father would be terribly angry and terribly grieved, if they all may not come. He says, "I strive and strive and wish that they may come to us. Although I am not their own father I care for them as for my own [children], and God will not punish me as [he would do] if I did not wish to have anything to do with them." So I beg you very much, sister dear, send him, because I have heard and shall have to hear from my man, "Why should you not have them all with you? Later on any of them could say to himself that through his stepfather he became an orphan and does not see his mother."[1] So send him. If he is so terribly ill they will send him back from Iłłowo, but I do not think that they will send him back. They are on ship-ticket and he goes to his mother, so I do not think that it will be so. Only send him, dear sister, and they will surely let him through. I beg you, Mr. Wiśniewski, very much, don't be anxious and afraid that you will have many difficulties. And at the frontier if you strike a bargain with a smuggler he can get ten persons through the frontier. And I will reward you for this. If he does not come it will be a

[1] The stepfather's motive in having the children brought is not affection for the children, whom he does not know, and is something more than attachment to his wife. We have here, in fact, a good insight into the nature of the feeling of moral obligation in the peasant. It is, first, the religious fear of God; second, the fear of a possible blame and reproach of the wronged persons. If there is the usual fear of public opinion, it is not expressed and certainly not very strong, since the man lives almost completely isolated from his community, while in normal peasant life this fear of public opinion is universally connected with the feeling of moral obligation. We have here a good proof that the crisis brought by emigration or any disintegration of communal life does not lead necessarily to a disintegration of morality. The explanation of the various results brought by the dissociation of the community (or family) in this respect, is probably to be found in the fact that social appreciation is not the only sanction for the peasant, but is indissolubly connected, in various proportions, with self-appreciation, and in certain conditions and for certain individuals this element of self-appreciation may develop strongly enough to substitute itself completely for the social appreciation. Thus, as we have seen in Adam Raczkowski, self-appreciation in the form of a feeling of personal importance, by substituting itself for familial solidarity, changes altruism from a duty into an expression of the personality. Here self-appreciation assumes the form of the feeling of righteousness before God and man. The source of the fear of the blame of the person wronged is not the same as that of the fear of social blame; in the first a magical background is still noticeable, while nothing like this can be detected in the second.

wrote you those rather disagreeable words. But, my sister, you ought to pardon me, because as your soul pains you for your children, so does mine. I want to see them, I don't know [can't express] how much, because my soul aches for them. You probably got angry with me, as I have no letter from you. Well, I can do nothing; when it passes, then answer me, dear sister.

Can they come to me this year or not? Because if they don't come this year, I must buy a whole ship-ticket for Staś, because when he is 11 years old a whole ship-ticket is necessary and he can travel alone.

I haven't written any letter to mother, and mother is angry that I don't send them money and they must keep my children. Whether I send money or not my children must work with uncle. Let them send the children to me; I don't want anything else. With me it is also hard. I am not working myself, and in America it is not as it was. If they believe that they are wronged let them send the children to me and I will take them. And I don't wish to take the children at their expense, but at mine. I will not pay money in addition to the work of my children. I know [everything about them], because many people with whom I am acquainted come here, and just now Kaliszewiak came to America and called on me and told me about everything. I have nothing more to write, only I send you my lowest bows and wishes for every good.

BOTH HELENA and JOSEPH DĄBROWSKI

416 October 12, 1906

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . Further, we have heard that brother Teofil wishes to come to America. He wrote about it to Adam and the latter wrote to me. If it is true, then answer, and we will send him a ship-ticket. Let him come and bring my children, because brother Adam wrote that he cannot send a ship-ticket to him because all the money he had he lent to our older brother for his house. He cannot send a ship-ticket and he requested me to take up this question.

So we have nothing more to write, only we beg your pardon. Don't be angry with us. Be good and kind. We send you low bows and good wishes. Your well-wishing sister with husband and little son,

HELENA, JÓZEF, and FRANCISZEK DĄBROWSKI,
With respect forever

did not write either for a still longer time, so that I could wait no longer for your letter. What is the news with you, my dear [ones], are you in good health? How are you succeeding? I hope that you will answer me in a brief letter after receiving my letter; I will hope this.

Dear sister, I write as to a sister and I complain as to a sister about my children from the old country—those three boys. I did not have them with me, and I grieved continuously about them; and today again, on the other hand, my heart is bleeding. They will not listen to their mother. If they would listen, they would do well with me. But no, they wish only to run everywhere about the world, and I am ashamed before people that they are so bad. They arrived, I sent them to school, because it is obligatory to send them; if you don't do it the teacher comes and takes them by the collar. So they have been going, but the oldest was annoyed with the school: "No, mama, I will go to work." I say, "Go on to school." But "No!" and "No!" Without certificates from the school they won't let them work. I got certificates for the two oldest ones: "Go, if you wish." They worked for some time, but they got tired of work. One went with a Jew to ramble about corners [trading or amusing himself?], and for some days was not to be seen; I had to go and to search for him. The worst one of them is Stach; the two others are a little better. They were good in the beginning but now they know how to speak English, and their goodness is lost. I have no comfort at all. I complain [to you] as to a sister, perhaps you will relieve me at least with a letter, if you write me some words, dear sister.[1]

[1] In this letter we have the whole tragedy of the breakdown of old sentimental habits. There must have been a complex process of weakening relations between mother and children, due to the facts that in the mother there evidently coexist more or less independently the old sentimental habits and some new ones, acquired in America and in her second marriage, while in the children there is a rapid and more or less complete evolution from the old familial life to an individual independence. We shall find elsewhere (letters of Aleksander Wolski) the proof that the children were disappointed in their expectations when they came to their mother; there were in her some new features which made her appear almost a stranger to them. On the other hand, the children lost their primitive attitudes even more rapidly and completely, and after some time the mother, from the standpoint of her old sentimental attitudes, began to see strangers in them. Probably this disintegration of the family was hastened by the lack of a father. At any rate, the result is that the mother feels the old set of her sentimental attitudes to a large extent objectless, and the disappointment with her children makes her cling more eagerly than ever to her sister—the only person of her whole family who

terrible sorrow and trial for us, and a large expense, because they will not give us the money for this ship-ticket back; and I shall ever bear a grief in my heart, that I endeavored to have this child and have it not. Remember, dear sister, send him to me, I beg you for the love [of God?]. And now you wrote that you will send me a shawl, but don't make any trouble about it for yourself and for the [man] who comes. May only all my children come; I don't wish anything more. As you grieve about your children, so I grieve about mine. And I beg you once more, send me all the children, because the ship-tickets are sent for all of them in order that they may all come. We salute you all and we wish you every good. Both of us beg for all the children. We will reward you for it. Mr. Wiśniewski, if they ask you during the journey about anything, say only this, that you bring children to their parents. That is all; you don't need any other explanations. And now again, if God leads you happily through the water perhaps they will require somebody, mother or father, to come and meet you in New York; then they will ask, "Is it your father or mother?" Let them [the children] say, "It is our mother or father." And say Mr. Wiśniewski is my brother. Then all will be well, only don't give any other explanation than such as we request you to give. And now, dear sister, you write that perhaps they will send him back from Iłłowo. Well, then nothing can be done. It would be the will of God; he would be an orphan until his death and would never more see his mother. O my God, what a sorrow for me! But perhaps God will grant him to be let through. Prepare them all [for the journey], dear sister, I hope that he will get through.

Your well-wishing and loving,

DĄBROWSKIS

418 June 6 [1908?]

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . I have not written to you for a long time, so that I feel a longing. Is it true, dear sister, that you are angry with me—I don't know for what reason. Dear sister, let us forgive each other, because our Lord God orders us to forgive one another, and we, so far away in the world, should we not forgive? Our Lord God suffered more without guilt and forgave us sinners; should we not forgive each other? Let us forgive each other all griefs, dear sister. Write me a letter about your health and success. It is true that I did not write you any letter for a long time, but you

If perhaps you have some new [question], write the soonest possible; perhaps something about that property. [Salutations.]

Dear sister, somebody writes your letters very indistinctly. Your boy knows how to write; he can always write your letters.

I would ask you for something which I need very much; please send it to me the soonest possible. It is the birth-certificates of my boys which I need. Get them from the priest for 5 copecks and send them to me, I shall be very grateful to you for it, and later on I will tell you all, why I need them. But I beg you very much, send the soonest possible the birth-certificate of Stach. I wish to know how old he is. Perhaps he will still be a man. I will give him to the school, perhaps he will do better afterward, when he learns to be some kind of craftsman. Later on he can do better. But I want his birth-certificate. Please send me one for 5 copecks.

420 April 5 [1910 or 1911]

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received your letter from Brodowska. She said: "Mrs. [Wolska], your sister, told me something, but I don't remember what it was she said," and she gave me the letter. I send you hearty thanks for remembering me, for your being so good and gracious and remembering about us and our affairs. May God help you, dear sister, in everything; God will help you for your good and true heart. Now, dear sister, as to that property, we beg you very much, dear sister, go to the notary and ask the notary to explain to you exactly how it is and what consequences can come from it. Try to set aside the decision, and strive, dear sister, that they may do nothing. They took father's [my first husband's] life away from him, let them do penance for it. I have suffered misery enough with my children without a father, let them suffer now with this their property. If they were good they would come to you and say: "Why should we destroy one another endlessly, Madam? Let us reconcile ourselves conscientiously with one another. Write to your sister and we will be reconciled, and then perhaps God will pardon us." They could say, "We will give what we can, be it more or less, but let there be a holy concord." They don't wish to do it. Do your best, dear sister and brother-in-law, let them be able to do nothing, let it be so till the minors come to their majority, let it be

Salutations from us both and from our children to you, sister and brother-in-law, and to your children. We ask for an answer.

We remain, well-wishing,

H. J. DĄBROWSKIS

419 January 10 [1909, 1910, or 1911]

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . I received the letter with the wafer and I thank you for thinking of me, dear sister. Now, dear sister and brother-in-law, don't be angry if I don't write to you very often, but I don't know how to write myself and before I ask somebody to write time passes away, but I try to answer you sometimes at least. You ask me how much my boys and my man earn. My man works in an iron-foundry, he earns 9, 10, 12 roubles [dollars] sometimes, and the boys earn 4 or 5 roubles. My dear, in America it is no better than in our country: whoever does well, he does, and whoever does poorly, suffers misery everywhere. I do not suffer misery, thanks to God, but I do not have much pleasure either. Many people in our country think that in America everybody has much pleasure. No, it is just as in our country, and the churches are like ours, and in general everything is alike. I wish to know with which son grandmother is. Write me. And who is farming on that land after Rykaczewski? Perhaps we shall yet meet some day or other, dear sister. I should like to see you, and my native country. I have nothing more to write, I kiss you both and your children. I wish you a happy and merry and good New Year. May this New Year bring you the greatest happiness possible. We wish it to you from our heart. The children kiss auntie and uncle and their cousins.

We remain, well-wishing,

H. J. DĄBROWSKIS

My children, thanks to God, are not the worst now.[1]

---

is still a real link with her old life. This proves at the same time how much stronger the old sentimental habits are as compared with the new ones, and how much more difficult is the adaptation to new conditions for a woman than for a man. Compare her brothers.

[1] The process of readaptation between mother and children begins, but it will never be complete: the mother cannot get rid of her old desire of authority and tendency to a complete unity of familial life, while the children, after their period of wildness, can neither come back to the traditional familial attitudes of the old country nor yet develop a new organization of their familial life in which individualism and solidarity would be harmoniously unified.

I have nothing more to write. We wish you a merry holiday of Easter, we wish you every good. The address of our brothers is the same; you can write to them. I also have letters from them seldom. Hearty thanks, sister, for the sacred things, medals and pictures. I regret that I took the children from our country so soon. In our country perhaps they would have had some misery, and in America they have none, and because of this many become dissolute. In America children have a good life; they don't go to any pastures, but to school, and that is their whole work.[1] . . . .

H. J. DĄBROWSKIS

421 August 7, 1911

. . . . DEAR SISTER: . . . . Now, dear sister, I don't know what it means that you did not deign to answer my letter. Perhaps I wrote you something disagreeable. It seems to me that nothing disagreeable was written, but it is long since I have had a letter from you, and you wrote me, dear sister, that you would tell me more in another letter. I am waiting and waiting, and I don't receive any news from you, so I beg you very much for an answer. Perhaps you found something disagreeable in my letter. Then I beg you, excuse me. And perhaps you did not receive, dear sister, that letter at all; but if you have for a long time no letter from me you could write some words just the same. Your children know how to write, so it is not difficult for you. Dear sister, write, how much is this property worth which the children inherit, and how dear are farms at this time; perhaps we shall come some day or other. I beg you, my dear, write me about this property; perhaps there is some news, perhaps they are cheating us there. I will also answer you what I intend to do about all this, whether we shall come or not. And now, dear sister, as to my children, I gave Maniek away to a school for 2 years. If he is good, I will take him [then], if he is not good, he will remain there till his twenty-first year. If he does his best and listens to what they tell him to do they will let him go sooner. If he does not listen,

[1] The failure to control children in America, owing to the loss of social authority by the parents and the failure to develop an individual authority, have been discussed in Vol. I. Helena's statement is, however, a good illustration of the changed conditions under which the parental authority is weakened. In Poland the children do light farm-work under the eye of their parents, while the American school is certainly a factor of emancipation.

for the glory of God, and let them have nothing of it.[1] Dear sister, if the notary says that you have no right to make a claim because you have no power of attorney, then we will send you a paper which will be valid, if you need it. Now, dear sister, I wish very much to go to our country, but it is too difficult for me, because the children are little. Perhaps I shall come some day or other, at least to see you, if God sends us health and long life. Now, dear sister and brother-in-law, if you manage that they shall not waste it [the property], when our children come of age we can send you a power of attorney and you can get [a part of it] for your trouble and toil. Offer [a part] for the glory of God, and give [the remaining] to them [to my children]. If not yourself, then your children can live long enough and take it, but give nothing to them [the adverse party]. They have much to lose and [still] they do not wish to make peace in a godly manner. If they wished it they would make peace in a godly manner, but they do not wish it; so don't let them cheat you out of anything on any pretext [technicality]. Tell me everything, how and what the notary speaks. Even if we should come now to our country it would not pay us to go with small children for this piece of land. Perhaps we shall come later on, after some years, when the children grow larger and I can take them to our country with me. As to the children, two of them are very good children. One is working and gives his money [to me], the other is going to school, and learns well, but the third is not at home at all. Stach has been bad, is bad, and will be bad. So long as he was smaller, he remained more at home. I begged him, "Stach, remain at home with your mother." No, he runs away and loafs about. Well let him run. I had his eyes wiped [had him instructed] as well as I could; he can read, write, and speak English, quite like a gentleman. You say, "Beat." In America you are not allowed to beat; they can put you into a prison. Give them to eat, and don't beat—such is the law in America. Nothing can be done, and you advise to beat! Nothing can be done; if he is not good of himself, he is lost.

[1] Typical attitude. The members of Helena's husband's family who sue her have by the fact of this suit taken the standpoint of strangers and enemies, and merit not the slightest regard, while if they had tried to settle the matter in a conciliatory way, they would have put themselves in the same familial group, and thus the family solidarity would have become a principle of the division of the property. By the lawsuit all ties of group-solidarity are broken, at least for the time.

to us. I would care for him as for my own child. If he wishes, let him come. Do what is the best for you. My children are sometimes good and sometimes not good. As to that property about which you write, let it be quiet for some time; I will see later on. Now, my dear, I expect a woman's illness, I don't know how God will deliver me. If I am in good health I will write you something more.

I kiss you, little sister, and your man and children. I wish you good success. Your boy wrote the letter well enough. He can at least write himself. From our brothers I have sometimes a letter.

We remain, well-wishing,

DĄBROWSKIS

I ask for an answer. You weep more than once, dear sister, and I also weep more than once.

423 May 6, 1912

. . . . DEAREST SISTER, WITH CHILDREN: I received from you a letter, but what a letter! With a great regret and sorrow and woe! I shed tears and I could not calm myself from the grief and woe and sorrow which came upon you, dear sister. O my God, my God, what a misfortune has befallen you! At so young an age your husband left you a widow, a lonely orphan, with your children! O my dear, whenever I think of it I shed tears, I grieve, but how can I help you? I cannot help you. I know what a sorrow and misery it is, because I was a widow myself. Oh, that is a burden—an indescribable woe. But, my dear sister, I beg you, don't grieve. There is nothing to do. It is God's will, God governs us, not ourselves. God took from you a husband, a friend, a guide, and the father of your children. Conform yourself to the will of God, adjust yourself the best you can, pray for your father, and you, sister, for your husband, and God will love you and bless you, if you conform yourself to the will of God. So I request you, don't grieve, don't despair, I beg you very much. Could I help and comfort you I would hasten at the same moment to do it, but I cannot. I grieve only about your bad fortune.

You, children, I request you, respect your mother and listen to her, because God left you only a mother as guide and took your father to Him. Listen to your mother, respect her and behave yourselves well. Especially you, oldest son, listen to your mother and respect

they will not let him go until his twenty-first year. I gave him away, dear sister, because he would not go to school and listen. I have always had trouble with him. I had to send him there, and perhaps he will become a [good] man. They teach reading and writing and different kinds of work. When he is older he will not suffer misery. I call on him frequently. He feels well. If he suffered misery there I would not allow this. The oldest is not with me, the second is not with me, I feared this one would run away from me, and I gave him away. He will the sooner learn to be reasonable, and he can become a man. . . . .

H. J. Dąbrowskis

422 December 18, 1911

Dear Sister and Brother-in-law: . . . . I received your letter with the Christmas tokens for which I thank you very heartily. We divide the wafer among ourselves, we wish you a Merry Christmas. May God grant us to live until the next year. I beg your pardon if my letter arrives too late for Christmas; it was written too late, my dear. I don't know myself how to write, so I cannot write when I wish, but when that person who writes my letters has time to spare. Now, my dear sister and brother-in-law, you ask my advice about the boy. It would be very well to give him the school [instruction], because the school is a great fortune, but will it not be too burdensome for you? Do what you consider right, my dear. If he learns well and is willing, try to give him the school. It is not necessary for him to become a priest; he can be something else. The duties of a priest are hard and difficult, and it is better to be a good peasant than a bad priest.[1] Do what you consider right and what your strength suffices for, my dear. Now, you will send your oldest son to America. He is a little too young, and in America work is hard and now the times are bad. In America there are different kinds of work, heavy and light, but a man from our country cannot get the light one, because he does not know the language. A light-headed person can soon be corrupted in America, especially a young man. I don't write it about your son, God forbid! Perhaps your children are not so bad. Well, my sister and brother-in-law, if you wish, send him to America. We will try to find work for him, we will care about him, if he listens

[1] This reflection shows the influence of American democratism. Perhaps it does not come from Helena herself, but from her husband.

some way; I cannot possibly lend you. Don't be resentful. I will not come to our country. Some day perhaps, but not soon. Do the best you can. I have no health and shall never have; I hardly walk about the house. If I had health I should go and earn, but I cannot. One man works for all our household; you know yourself how it is possible to live [in such conditions], and you ask me to help you. I cannot. I know that you can work and find a good way. You have property, you suffer no misery and cannot suffer it. If only your children are good you can farm. You are doing better than I here in America, because I must live from hand-work.

We greet you, all your household. Be in good health and manage well. Take care of yourself. I kiss you. I pity you, but how can I help? Please answer.

With respect,

H. J. Dąbrowskis

425 December 1 [1912]

. . . . Dear Sister, with Children: . . . . I received your letter, my dear, and I will help you in this matter of a ship-ticket for your son.[1] My dear, I wrote directly to our brothers, as you wrote to them, about this ticket and the brothers wrote me, that they answered you also. You know what they wrote you, and to me they answered that they cannot send a ship-ticket. So I answer you at once: If he wishes it and if you wish it, sister, I will send him a ticket [but] only for the water-passage; and through Prussia and from the ship to me, let him pay himself. Give him money, because even if it is paid from place to place they nevertheless demand money. Though everything was paid for my children the man who brought them had to pay nevertheless, and so they exacted some dollars for nothing. Now, dear, you are probably not without a cent. He wants to come. Give him money and let him leave as soon as you receive this letter. It would be the best, because he would come sooner. Now work is good, and later on we don't know. When he comes he can send you the money back in a short time. Then we will provide for him. Let him only be willing to listen and be good. I have not sent the ship-ticket [but wait] until I receive your answer to this letter.

[Helena]

[1] Aleksander Wolski, whose letters are included in this series.

her. God forbid that you should cause her any sorrow. I, your auntie, beg you, children, very much to do it.[1] I wrote directly a letter to our brothers and I requested them to write a letter to you.

Myself, dear sister, I walk a little already. My health is weak, but I ought to thank God the Merciful for this great grace that I am still alive for the sake of my orphans. But I shall nevermore be so well as before. From Christmas till Easter I did not leave my bed and I could not turn myself in bed. Now I am walking again, but feebly. I ask you for an answer as to how you are getting on after the death of your husband, and whether you received a letter from our brothers. I hasten to comfort you at least with a letter. Remember, don't grieve. I kiss you and your children. Live, you orphans, with God. God bless you.

I remain in sorrow for you, dear sister,

H. J. Dąbrowskis

I ask you for an answer.

424 June 12 [1912?]

. . . . Dear Sister: . . . . You ask me whether I shall come to our country and when. My dear, I will not come to our country, because I have nothing to come for. I wrote you what a misfortune I had with my illness. My illness and the funeral [of the child] cost me much, and in America everything is expensive. Mine [my man] did not work for a long time when I was ill, so I exhausted all my money. My illness and [illegible word], and my children ruined me. They could earn now, but they went away from me. Is it not a sorrow? I brought them here and all this cost me you know how much. Well, I will not tell you much, because it is hard for me. And you wrote me, dear sister, to lend you [money]. But have I money? If I had, certainly I would lend it to you, from my soul, but I cannot. You have property, you can find some way, and myself, what I don't earn here I have not. And you, my dear, you can find

[1] From this and the preceding letter it is evident that Helena keeps unchanged the familial attitude, both in matters of solidarity—in deciding to take her nephew, and in the sincere sympathy she expresses with her sister—and in matters of authority, when she demands beforehand that her nephew shall listen to her when he comes, and when she exhorts all the sister's children to listen to their mother after their father's death.

standing all my wishes I cannot now, because I am in service. If God grants you to live till summer, then perhaps, but even so I cannot say certainly because I don't know what will be. I should like very much to see you, you know it, but nothing can be done; I don't depend upon myself [but on my master]. I am not in very good health either. I live as I lived, nothing new. I had a letter from Teofil; he is in good health, thanks to God, and is doing well; nothing new or particular.

We have had very cold weather during this whole time for three months. I wish you to bear at least your illness easily. It is necessary to agree with the will of God. We shall all be in that other world sooner or later; even the rich cannot buy himself off from sickness and death, and so it is necessary to agree with God's will. Perhaps God will still allow us to see one another, but it would be vain to think of it beforehand, because things never go on as you wish them. I wish you every good; I don't find words to relieve you. We send to everybody greetings and our best wishes. Dear brother, we don't have any anger against you, how can you think it! I kiss and embrace you most heartily, dear brother.

We remain, your loving and well-wishing,

Brother Ludwik and Sister-in-law Małgorzata Wolski

428 April 8, 1912

Dear Brother and Sister-in-law: We received your letter and we are very much grieved that you had to spend such sad holidays, but it is necessary to submit to everything. It is the will of God. We shall all die; nothing can be done against it. Notwithstanding all my desires and wishes, I cannot come. If my letter still finds brother alive, please, sister-in-law, explain to him that I cannot leave my place to go. I should not help him in doing it; death will come in any case as it is destined. To us it is very hard and painful and we feel it very much, but we can be of no help. We kiss him and bid him farewell, because probably we shall see him no more. You write and despair, sister-in-law, that you will be left with your children. But the children are big and they can work themselves, and you have a farm. Other widows remain and not a copeck is left after their husbands, and still they find some way; and you have a farm. You need only to work and not to be lazy; there will be enough to live on.

426 [St.] Petersburg, October 7, 1905

"Praised be Jesus Christus!" [etc.]

Dear Brother [Antoni]: [Generalities about health.] I received your letter, but I could not answer, because I had no time. The young lady [daughter of a Russian aristocrat whom he is serving] came and remained for some weeks, and I don't know how to write Polish myself.[1] As to Teofil, I spoke to him when he was with me. I told him something quite different. I advised him to go to Prussia, to earn some money there, and only then to go to America, not so [as he intends]. He has got accustomed to travel in trains and would like to travel more, but on whose money? I had some money, but I went to the country, then to Warsaw. I had to feed him and myself for some time. Whence can I get so much money? My money is exhausted. I have been without money myself, particularly during this year when I have spent some hundred roubles in travel alone. And what about living and clothes? I must buy everything for my own money. My lord and lady are not here. They don't give me money [for living]. In Petersburg money is easily spent; it is not like the country. We have nothing more to write, we send hearty wishes to you, brother, sister-in-law, Teofil, and children.

Your well-wishing brother and sister-in-law,

L. Wolskis

You could write a letter to America, to your family, in order that they may send him a ship-ticket. He would be better considered then. There is a man here, with whom I am acquainted, who said that this would do very well—better than money. He would be more respected and would get work more easily.

Ludwik Wolski

Greetings to sister Bronisława. Inform me how she is getting on, because you never write me about her.

427 February 13, 1912

Dear Brother: I received your letter, but I had no time to answer, and the time passes so you don't notice it. I am very much grieved that you feel so sick. You ask me to come, but notwith-

[1] This shows that he either emigrated to Russia as a young boy or, more probably, stayed there after his military service.

429 December 20, 1912

"Praised be Jesus Christus!" . . . .

DEAR BROTHER [LUDWIK] AND SISTER-IN-LAW: We inform you about our success. Our success, you know brother, is very sad. Dear kindred, you complain about your misery. But nobody writes to our country such things as you write. Him [my son] strange people will take, at their expense they take him. He will molest you no more. He will be there in any case, and you will not see him again. Because you don't want to see us. May God pay you [with good] even for this. Farewell, dear brother, for the last time, with your family. With tears, for the last time.

TEOFILA WOLSKA

I divide with you a wafer through this lifeless paper. Because surely we shall meet no more. Nor my children either. Remain with God.[1]

430 [UNION CITY, CONN.] July 14 [1913]

[Usual greetings and wishes.]

Now I inform you, dear mother, that I brought everything with me, I did not lose even the smallest thing. I got here with $13.00 and I have bought me a suit and shoes. Of the $44.00 that auntie sent for the ship-ticket, she intends to make me a present of one half and I have to work back the other half. I will work hard now in order that I may be able to send you some 10 or 20 dollars. Now I am very sorry, because it is harvest time there [with you], and [I don't know] how you can manage it, mother; and you have no money.[2]

---

tility between Russians and Poles in general, the difference of social conditions, traditions, etc.—while the greater sociability of the Russians as compared, e.g., with that of the Americans and the greater facility which the Pole has in learning the language makes the assimilation of the immigrant easier, particularly as there are no large Polish centers in Russia as in America. In this case the particular egotism of the man and the demoralizing life of a butler may have played a rôle.

[1] Complete breaking of the familial relation, as reaction to Ludwik's hardness. The contrast between the gentle and sorrowful form and the content is interesting, particularly as compared with the brutal form of Ludwik's letters.

[2] The boy is evidently young, perhaps eighteen, but he has already the attitude of the head of a family, mixed with respect for his mother and even some fear of her. (Cf. No. 436.) There is a seriousness in him hardly ever found in a boy of the same age whose father is alive. At the same time there is an interesting contrast between his familial attitude and the individualism of his cousins. The

Your son Aleksander writes that he does not know what to do when his father dies, and asks me to advise him. But I do not know what sort of a farm you have, how many cattle and everything. I could give you advice only if I knew how you succeed [in your farming]. And when you write a letter, sister-in-law, request somebody to write it, because it is impossible to understand what is written; it is without sense and one and the same. I wrote in the other letter that I will not come and now you repeat the same things to me. Please tell brother that I and my wife have not any grievance against him; let him rest easy. We send to you all our good wishes on occasion of the past holidays. Submit to the will of God. And I want to know whether you have been away, sister-in-law, because as long as brother was in good health you gave no word of yourself and now, after four years, you have spoken. I received letters from brother and from his children, but you were as if you had never been. It is very disagreeable to me. Probably you acted just so with brother; you could not take care to lengthen his life. As to my coming, I cannot come now. When I am free I will come; only I don't know when, and whether during this year. With us everything is as of old. We are sick a little, but for the time being it is nothing. I remind you once more, request somebody to write your letters, and longer [ones]. It is not necessary to register them, letters arrive so. We wait for your answer and we send greetings to everybody.[1]

We remain, well-wishing,

YOUR BROTHER LUDWIK and YOUR SISTER-IN-LAW WOLSKI

[1] This letter is a plain endeavor to get rid of any familial claims, to isolate himself completely from the familial group. While Ludwik does not dare to break completely the relation with his brother individually, he declines completely any future participation in the life of the brother's wife and children. His sister-in-law and his nephew, according to the tradition, want him to be morally the guardian after Antoni's death. He declines absolutely to accept this rôle. At the same time, cruelly rebuking the woman, and trying to place the blame on her—pretending that the reason of his coldness is the fact that she had not written to him for four years, while, as we see from other series, it is sufficient for one member of the family to write in order to keep the familial relation between the group and the absent individual. This is, in fact, the only example we have of the complete and conscious severing of familial relations unjustified by any quarrel. The only plausible explanation is the influence of Russian life. We had to make the same supposition in attempting to explain the rapid disintegration of the Barszczewski family. In Ludwik the influence is still more marked because he has probably lived for many years in isolation among the Russians. Besides the lack of familial unity in Russian life, there may be also other factors—the latent or manifest hos-

Now mother, you want me to write letters more often. What shall I write? I will only answer every one of your answers. This costs you enough, and it costs me doubly, when I send [the letter] and when one comes.[1] Dear mother inform me, please, whether the weather during the harvest is good or not, whether all the crops were good, what others came to America after me. Please describe all this to me. And now I inform you that I have a terrible longing and never can I forget our country. What help can you give me? As soon as I recall [our country], tears come to my eyes every time, and also because I have no friend. Aunt also is not very good. When I come from the shop in the evening, if only I do not help her in anything she gets directly angry, and so she scolds and calls God's wrath down on her husband and me for every trifle. I have never heard this at home.[2] In the beginning she said I had to "work back" for half the debt [for the ship-ticket], but now she says for the whole. Four weeks more and I shall work it back. May God only give me health, and I will never forget you and I will further try to behave the best I can. I don't smoke, I don't drink. There are two boarding with aunt. They have been in America ten years, are unmarried and work every day, and they have not a cent in their pocket. I will not do as they do, so that I may earn money and return home.[3] Let Bronisław Tkaczyk come if he wishes; different works are going well everywhere. When the days get cooler I will try harder work; now it is too hot. I will do such work as uncle does. I am nearly as [strong as] uncle.

And you, Julek, write to me, whether they [the boys] beat you there in my absence. When I was there many feared me. For myself, I don't suffer misery here in America, but you do there in our country. I have nothing more to write. I send only, and we all

[1] As in Russia, letters are often lost, the Polish peasants usually send them without stamps, because double postage is then collected from the receiver, and the government safeguards the letter with formalities which are equivalent to registration. Registration is safer, but in addition to dread of the formality, the peasant does not like to go to *any office*.

[2] Helena's character may have become embittered through her experiences with her children, but probably she has always been more despotic and quarrelsome than her rather meek sister.

[3] His temperance is not the result of moral considerations, but simply that of the seriousness of his attitude toward life and his estimation of the task which he has to accomplish. This is perfectly typical. In spite of the efforts of the clergy there is never any moral reaction toward intemperance as toward something bad in itself, but merely as toward an obstacle in tending to some end.

O dear mother, I grieve more than you. Often I weep secretly, and not an hour passes without my thinking about home. Nothing rejoices me in America. May our Lord God give me health that I may get our affairs in order and return to our country the soonest possible. I pay aunt only for board, for nothing more—$3.00 a week, because living is very expensive. Aunt gave $2,700 for this house. She borrowed $700. And those boys whom auntie brought from our country, they did harm. Uncle bought them everything that they wanted, and they did not want to work, although they could already. And then they simply went away.[1] Stasiek went away two years ago, and Józef went away after Stasiek, and since then uncle and auntie have not seen them. I did not see them either, but they are not far away; by street-car from Waterbury it costs only 10 cents. And auntie gave Maniek away to a farm-school; it is so called. It is a sort of a prison where they learn and work. And those who are there are not allowed to speak to one another. He has already been there for 2 years. If aunt wishes he will remain there till his twenty-first year. So I have not seen him either, because [the fare] to him costs half a dollar. I inform you, dear mother, how many hours a day I work and how much a week I earn. I work in an iron-foundry 10 hours a day. Now, in the beginning, I have light work. I choose different irons out [classify], which are good and which not, because now it is terribly hot. Later on I shall try other work. [End missing.]

[ALEKSANDER WOLSKI]

431 July 28 [1913]

[Usual greetings and wishes.]

Now I write to you, mother, about the address of uncle in America; I would have written it from memory, but I do not know the number.

---

difference is probably due to a number of factors: (1) Helena's boys came to America while still children, and thus the familial attitude was not developed and the individualizing influences had a free field; (2) Helena had married for the second time and this hindered the development of any real familial solidarity between her and her children; (3) Aleksander is the heir of his father's farm, and land is the economic nucleus around which the family would remain grouped in this case, at least until the moment of its division.

[1] The boy's view of his cousins' behavior is evidently influenced by his aunt. At the same time he fully shares his aunt's standpoint of appreciation, which is that of familial solidarity. There is no contradiction, as we shall see, between this letter and No. 435, where he takes the side of his cousins.

Now, dear sister, you ask why do I not write to you, you say that I am angry with you. I am not angry. I have nothing to be angry about, and we speak often among ourselves of how much you must suffer alone. You have nobody with you now in our country; you are quite alone, like a single stump in the field. Dear sister, you have a good son in America. I also have begun farming, but in the beginning it is difficult. I lack money for everything.

[HELENA]

433 November 2, 1913

. . . . DEAR MOTHER: Everything rejoices me very much in the letter in which you described everything to me. It was probably Julek who wrote, because I could not read many words; letters were omitted, others were not written distinctly. You wrote that you intended to get lumber. I don't know what for. Or perhaps have someone come to help you? It was not distinctly written. As to what you wrote me to do, I will do everything gladly a little later, because I have not all [the money needed]. Don't be afraid about me, I am trying to have everything come out as well as possible. I cannot cease thinking, not an hour passes without my thinking about home. I have ever in my head this [idea]—how does everything go on there? I don't drink, I don't smoke, I deprive myself of it more easily than in our country. Nor do I go anywhere. I come from work, I wash myself, eat supper and sit down or I help aunt do something, and I go to sleep. In the morning I must rise at half-past five, and get ready for work. During the recent holidays [All-Saints, November 1, and All-Souls days] we worked. Only during English holidays the factory stops and we do not work. Now I would go to uncle, but I cannot, because in other cities work does not go very well; many people are paid off. Therefore one must keep the work he has, because many people are standing near the factories and begging for work, so one must hold on to his work.

I should not be so sad if aunt did not scold and quarrel about every trifle; therefore I am so sad. If it gets worse and worse I will not live there.

And now I request you, Julek, and you, Aniela, listen well to mother, to what she says and what she orders you to do. Learn well, because I am thankful to mother that I know at least how to write and to read a little. May mother's hands become golden in reward

send, hearty greetings to you and to our acquaintances. May God grant this. Amen.

And that accordeon I brought with me is not spoiled at all. On Sundays I amuse myself, and it plays like a new one.

[ALEKSANDER WOLSKI]

432 September 1 [1913]

. . . . Now, dear mother, I write you once more. Send me, please, the address of my uncle [Teofil] in America. Dear mother, I have already worked back for the ship-ticket, now I will work for you [to send you money], for digging the potatoes in the autumn. We are both working with Ososki from Bartniki; we do the same work one near another. He greets his brother in Leszno. We both long terribly for our country. He left his wife and children on his farm, and we say to each other, "How they are suffering there alone." When he came from our country 2 months ago, he got at first good work in another city, in Naget. From Union City to Naget is one verst. But that factory stopped for a month, so now we are working together. When it starts, if it goes well, we shall both go there to work. We say to each other that when we earn some money we will soon return to our country, because now it is terribly hard in America; everything is dear, and it is difficult to get work. So I work as hard as I can in order to return soon to our country. I long terribly for my country; nothing gives me pleasure in America. We must be very attentive in our work, every hour, because if anything is bad we are without work.[1] We went once with auntie to Waterbury to her boys, to those farms where they are, but we could not see them; on Sunday we walked about for half a day asking for them, but we could not find out where they are. In August terrible rains fell, and the mornings are cold now.

[ALEKSANDER]

[1] It is not without significance that he mentions working conditions immediately after speaking of his longing for home. The adjustment to hired factory-work is one of the most difficult which the immigrant has to make. In this case the boy is sustained by the expectation of success and a return home, but in cases where the children of immigrants are compelled to hand to their parents their total earnings (which is the usual practice), they frequently decline to be promoted to work paying more. No factory-work is stimulating, and a new adjustment is felt as an extra burden.

awfully; it is as if I had seen you. And you, Julek [I thank] for writing me about everything. You wrote this letter very distinctly. I am trying to manage so that we may all be together soon. And please, write me about this Zielazczak, whether he helps [you] or not, and whether he does something bad, for there was nothing written about him. Please write me which boys went to the army, which others came to America, whether Józef Sobiraj got rid of his sickness or not, and about those neighbors who live near to us, which of them annoys you. Please, mother, write me, describe to me what is of interest. Here it has rained during the whole autumn. On All Saints Day we had a frost which covered the windows, but now no more frost, only rains are falling. And about aunt I have nothing to write, no news. They have three children [by second husband]. Two are going to the school. I go nowhere myself; we remain together in the evening, we talk and laugh all together. [A man] from uncle's country is also boarding with aunt. He is 30 years old and unmarried. If I want to buy something he leads me everywhere. I have nothing more to write, I send you only hearty salutations and wish you a Merry Christmas. May God grant it. Amen.

[ALEKSANDER]

435 January 11, 1914

. . . . And now I inform you that on Christmas I saw Józef [son of Helena]. He came to us from the farm for the first time. I saw him at home, at dinner. If it had not been at home, I should not have recognized him. He has grown tall, a little taller than I am, and terribly thin and lean. His voice has also changed. He said also he would not have recognized me. We were terribly glad, both of us. He was two days with us, and we both went everywhere. The church is near, so we were both in the church. He related everything to me, and I, everything to him. He left his mother two years ago and had not seen her since. He regretted my father very much. He did not know that he was dead; he will see his uncle [the writer's father] no more. He told me how his uncle accompanied him to the frontier, and how he himself wanted neither to go away from his uncle nor to remain anywhere else; and tears gushed from his eyes. He was very sorry for you, working there alone and nobody with you at home. He said that he loved his uncle and auntie [the writer's parents] better than his own mother, because when he

for it, for forcing me to learn.[1] It cannot at all be described how well it is in the world when you know how to read and to write yourself and you can write down everything that you think.

Aunt keeps some nice ducks and hens, and she has some pigeons left by her boys. There were 50 ducks. She keeps 7 for breeding, and she has 80 hens. They are doing well, and she has 10 pigeons, but in comparison with ours they are ugly. You, Julek and Aniela, remember well about mine. Close the opening at night so that something may not devour them. You can sell some young ones, Julek, but leave a pair of the young ones, because otherwise they would be played out, if any of the old ones were lost. Write to me whether the old pairs are both doing well, and don't sell the old ones to anybody. And write me, whether Józef Sobiraj finished being sick [got well] or not, and does he work with his mother or is he hired somewhere. If he would come to America in the spring they would get on better. I have nothing more to write. [Usual greetings.]

[ALEKSANDER]

434 December 8, 1913

. . . . Now I inform that I have sent 65 roubles. I would send more, mother, but we have a slack in America; many people are everywhere without work. Our factory has worked 5 weeks for 5 days a week. We don't work on Saturdays, and on some days we don't work during some hours. This Ososki from Bartniki, brother of that one in Leszno, who worked with me, was paid off from one factory and has not worked for a week. He went everywhere, but he could not find work. I am working in the same place where I began. After New Year perhaps it will get better. I shall not see uncle soon, because I must keep terribly close to my work, and it is far; the journey to him and back will cost $5.00 and the city is large and it will be very difficult to find him. That letter rejoiced me

[1] "Hands," because she did so by beating him. The attitude of superiority which the boy assumes here toward his younger brother and sister is another sign that he considers himself the head of the family. When he tells them to listen to their mother, his expression is exactly the same as that of a father. We have here one proof more that the old familial solidarity excludes anything like a particular solidarity of the younger generation against the older, but is a kind of hierarchical solidary organization, particularly when there is a material basis of the existence of the group which calls for a manager.

436 February 22 [1914]

. . . . Dear Mama, I inform you that I am very sad. She has always cried out on me, but never refused me board, and now she has refused me board and I have gone to board with strange people. On the same day I found board elsewhere, and I swear by the love of God that I have paid everything as it ought to be. And aunt came to me for 30 roubles more. Such a conscience she had! But I have paid her already 40 roubles more,[1] and I swore by God and beat my breast.[2] Even strange people wondered that she has such a conscience, that she thinks out untruths and says them to the people. I swear by God that I have paid everything, and moreover she cheated me. She was that good to me! I almost burst open with grief. When auntie writes anything, don't believe a single word. I write you the whole truth. Probably she will also levy on my wages, but I don't know. I shall write to uncle and perhaps go [to him?]. Now I am at work and have 32 dollars. How it will be further, I don't know. I had never such a grief as I have now. I cannot describe all this. I shall not forget it. My head is almost bursting from it.[3] I did not get the letter from you, because I went away and the letter came to them; so they did not give it to me. From Traczyk also I have no letter. I have nothing more to write, only I send you hearty salutations. Another time I will tell you more. She reminded me also about this old man Wiśniewski, who brought her those children, that she buried him at her own expense, and she also made allusions to myself and to you in connection with him.

[Aleksander]

437 Nowy Peterhof, June 30, 1904

[Greetings and wishes.]

And now I inform you, dear brother and sister-in-law, about my [mis]fortune and the distress that awaits me. We are now destined to the war. So now we shall soon go away to the war, only I do not

[1] Probably there has been no conscious cheating on either side, but simply some miscalculation, always possible in the complex form which economic relations often assume between peasants when the matter is not mere buying or borrowing.

[2] Beating the breast is a gesture of asseveration. It is used as a sign of contrition in the church and in confession.

[3] The incoherence of the letter, contrasted with the usually elaborated form of his letters, shows how completely the boy is upset, and the enormous importance of even such a partial breaking of the familial relations.

came to his mother she neither looked at him nor knew him. He wept, and I also shed tears. His mother would have nothing to do with him. He said that if anybody gave him money he would at once go to his auntie, to our country, and help his auntie; if not, he will go with me to our country in the spring after next, and will remain with us until the call for military service; and after the service, if God lets him live, he will take that land back. He says there are few of us in our country, so we will work.[1] When he went away from us and said goodbye to his mother, his mother would not tell him goodbye. So he went away, but nearly fainted from sorrow, and I wept as never [before]. I went with him to the street-car. We went beyond the city, the street-car came, and he bade me farewell. He wept about me and I wept about him, as never yet I wept. Never had I such a sorrow as then. When I returned home I could not walk from sorrow. In our country one does not realize what family is, but in the world, when one sees somebody, it can be neither described nor told. I wept from dinner until evening, and when they asked me at home why I wept, I could not speak from sorrow, till I got a headache. I long terribly, because I have no friend with whom I may rejoice. Bojarski from Gustkowo has been in this city about 20 years, Mańka Leleniewianka from Gustkowo came to him at the end of carnival. It will be two years since she came. Sometimes on Saturdays I go to them. I have nothing more to write, only I send you hearty salutations and ask you for an answer.

[ALEKSANDER]

[1] Józef retains the old attitudes in spite of the evolution he has undergone in America, and though these old attitudes were not exclusive enough to allow him to remain with his mother. It is a case of psychological dissociation or stratification; the new characters are simply superimposed on the old ones without modifying them essentially. The same feature is found in persons of peasant origin who have had American college instruction. The cultural life is here connected with the English language and the American environment, while the Polish language and the Polish environment suggest merely the associations which are inclosed within the sphere of the peasant interests and traditions. These two strata do not interfere with each other and the same person is at one moment a cultivated American, when speaking English, at another moment a Polish peasant, when speaking Polish. Evidently, this situation is possible only because the peasant immigrants were almost completely cut off from the higher culture in Poland. In the present case the dissociation is probably due to the lack of any strong link connecting the previous life with the new one; the only link is the mother. It is very probable that Józef had lived during the past two years without much reflection on the past, absorbed in the actual conditions, and that only the meeting with his cousin and the talk of the latter brought the old attitudes to consciousness again.

438 November 1 [1904]

In the first words of my letter I say: "Praised be J. C." and I inform you, dear brother and sister-in-law, that I received your letter on November 1, and I was very glad when I learned that you are in good health, thanks to the highest favor of our Lord God. For myself, up to the present I am still alive and in health, thanks to Lord God the highest and to God's Mother. And as to my success and how I am living, I inform you that up to the present, thanks to God, all is well. We have had no hunger yet up to the present and we haven't now, only now it is already a little cold; little morning frosts happen already, but this is no misery yet. May only God and God's Mother grant that it does not become worse.

And as to the war, I should have much to describe, but I cannot write you much about it. I inform you only that we have been in battle for four days, and now we are in camp for some days. What will be further, God alone knows, when and what will be the end of all this. It doesn't seem at all that it will end soon, on the one or on the other side. Our Lord God alone knows what end will result from it. It is God's will. As God Almighty grants, so will it be. Let us only beg our Lord God and the miraculous Mother of God to give us health and to guard us from every misfortune, and commit everything to the will of God.

I inform Brodowski that his son is also alive and healthy, thanks to our Lord God. I will try to inform him as soon as possible and to repeat to him those few words, which you have written to him. I saw them not long ago, Brodowski and also Rykaczewski. They are also in good health, thanks to God the Almighty. [Bows for the whole family and wishes for good health.]

TEOFIL WOLSKI

439 January 1, 1905

. . . . And I inform you that now we stand in camp. We digged pits for ourselves, as we do in Poland for potatoes, and we are sitting inside. We have no great fighting now, only skirmishes happen;

---

of God, the weakness of man, etc., but mainly as a manifestation of humility. There seems to be a half-conscious fear that if he does not do it, God may punish him for his presumption, by destroying his plans. But in the matters of death and sickness, which remain the last refuge of magic, and sometimes in matters of marriage, where also magical practices persist even on a higher level of culture, fatalism is still powerful, because precisely in those lines the continuity of cause and effect is the most difficult of prevision.

know on what day and in which month. Dear brother and sister-in-law, I expected a letter from you, because I wrote to you, but I don't know what has become of you. I want at least to receive one letter from you, to speak [communicate] with you before my death, because I don't know the will of God, whether our Lord Jesus will allow me to return or not; I don't know it. And now I beg you, dear brother and sister-in-law, be so gracious and answer me. I don't know whether you are angry with me, because I wrote you a letter and I have no answer. I expect your letter every day and every hour and every minute in vain, and my heart is anxious, because I should be glad to speak with you, at least by letters, before my parting [half a page more about expecting letters and asking for letters]. Dear brother and dear sister-in-law, I beg your pardon, perhaps I did you sometime some wrong, so I ask for your pardon. Forgive me, because I go so far away, as to death. But I do not lose my hope in God, because our Lord Jesus remembers us better than we remember our Lord God, and therefore I pray our Lord God and this God's Mother of Częstochowa. May our Lord Jesus allow me to return, and God's Mother of Częstochowa. I offer myself to [rely on] the will of God and let it be as our Lord Jesus and this God's Mother of Częstochowa will turn me [decide about me]. I am satisfied with everything, because our Lord Jesus sends me such fortune, and nothing can be done against it. And now I bid you farewell, dear brother, I kiss you innumerable times, and I bid you farewell, dear sister-in-law, and I kiss you. Let our Lord Jesus help you for my prayer. And I bid you farewell, little brother Aleksander, and you, Władysław, and you, sister, and the whole household.[1]

I, your truly loving brother,

TEOFIL WOLSKI

[1] The letter has the purely traditional form of a farewell before death; it is a substitute for a spoken farewell. At the same time it shows the particular kind of fatalism of the Polish peasant, which is closely connected with the magical-religious system. Since in magic there is no continuity between cause and effect, the inability to calculate with certainty the effects of a cause and the almost unlimited range of possible events in a given situation open a wide field for fatalism. Man should do what he knows with certainty to be right in this situation, and then commit himself to the will of God but without any certainty of the results, because he never could have done *everything* necessary.

There was no place for fatalism in the old naturalistic religion, and the fatalistic attitude becomes more and more formal when magic loses its influence and the modern practical attitude, based upon the continuity of cause and effect, takes its place. The peasant, when stating a plan, still adds some words about the will

Suddenly on the right the Japanese attack us. We went joyfully with bayonets; we went to meet them with a cry of joy, to attain sooner our end.

But the will of God was contrary to us, we were obliged to leave the spot in order to hold the honor of the regiment, to save the banner and our life.

Under a hail of enemies' bullets, bombs, grenades, and shrapnel, we withdrew from our positions. Oh, what losses we had!

At every step I took, a dead body lay or a severely wounded groaned. I went along the road with sorrow in my heart, thinking: "Up to the present I am saved."

At last this great tumult ceased, and I went also with slower steps. I looked back at the smoke rising up to the clouds. And I said then with a subdued voice, looking at the blood streaming on the ground:

"Deign, O Lord, to give them eternal rest, and let the light of glory shine upon them in [centuries of centuries. Amen]."

[TEOFIL]

[Letter of January 25, 1905, with news of health and safety omitted.]

440 April 20, 1905

. . . . And as to my success, I am alive and in health, thanks to our Lord God the Highest, and that is all my success.

Everything is well, thanks to our Lord God. We are retiring in order toward Harbin. We walk slowly and rest. Only one day, i.e., on March 12, near Mukden, the Japanese gave us such a beating that we fled 77 versts without stopping. And I have nothing more to write you. If God grants me health and allows me to come back safely, I shall have much to relate to you; but what I could write in a letter, you can write me the same. As you write, so it is. We fight well, only it is unfortunate, that we must fly [conscious irony]. [Half a page about letters received and sent.]

And I inform you about Rykaczewski, that he is lost during our retreat without any tidings. And Brodowski is alive and healthy, thanks to our Lord God. . . . .

T. W.

441 April 27, 1905

. . . . I am in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and my success is also [good], glory be to God. Now we are quiet, we are in camp. On April 25 a priest visited us and we were at holy confession,

they are firing one against another every day, but not much. But presently we expect a great fight, and nobody knows what God will send. The air [weather] here up to the present is very good; no snow as yet, but frost began almost two months ago, and we have frost every day, not great, 10° or more [Réaumur], sometimes it reaches 20°. Yes, my dear brother and sister-in-law, up to the present, thanks to our Lord God the Highest and to God's Mother, we have not yet suffered great misery, although you know yourself that it is no pleasure; but in the position in which we find ourselves, up to the present we have but little to complain of. . . . .

Now it is going badly with you also, as you write to me, dear brother, that they are calling the reservists. God forbid them to take you also. I advise you, dear brother, if you feel anything bad, [apprehension], don't tarry long but direct yourself according to your thoughts [fly].

TEOFIL WOLSKI

A SOLDIER ON WAR[1]

After a long and dark night, at last it began to dawn. The day's apparition was so sad that the heart began to weep.

The sun, arising from behind the mountains, threw to us sad rays; and we remained in intrenchments, watching the shadows of the enemy.

We remained there and we turned our eyes to heaven, appealing for help from there, after so many days spent in hunger and so many tedious nights without sleep.

Everybody sends a prayer to God. May He help us to crumble the enemy and to return healthy after so long and heavy sufferings.

Suddenly a crash interrupted the sepulchral silence—the crash of the enemy's shrapnel which burst in our intrenchment, not missing its mark.

I saw before me a column of dark smoke rising up to the clouds. Oh, what a mark it left and what a blow it cast upon us!

I saw before me my companions lying, without hands or feet, and others in the moments preceding their death, gave sad and terrible groans.

There a surgeon binds up the wounds of the injured, others take them to the hospital, and so companions, helping their companion, save at last his life.

[1] Poetry, without rhythm but with some rhyme. Doubtful whether written by himself or another soldier.

We have no true news at all; what the soldiers say—you hear every moment something new. It is impossible to make anything out of our Manchurian papers which we read every day. From the news of these papers and from the soldiers' tales [one would think that] in one hour the war will end, and then again the fight is beginning and the war going on. So we cannot believe what we hear; we hope in our Lord God that the war will end soon, but up to the present we have no [certain] tidings. What is the news with you about the war? Please inform me, I am very curious. [More about the uncertain news, and about weather.]

As to your hunts, about which you write me, I heard also something, and that the big game is chased and will fall into nets, and with the big game the small will surely have to suffer, because when the hunter is chasing hares and meets partridges, he surely will not let them go.[1] If God grants that the war is over and helps me to get out of this slavery I don't know where to turn myself. My attachment and wishes attract me to my family, but, as it seems, with you it is no worse [no better] than with us. . . . .

TEOFIL WOLSKI

443 PHILADELPHIA, PA., April 8, 1907

. . . . DEAR WALCIA: And now I write you, my dear, an answer to your letter. Some things in this letter are good, and some things of little worth, because of this: If you come to your brother, I will come and get you and we could marry, remain for some years and return with something [some money] to our country, so that later we might not be obliged to earn [as hired laborers]. If I should return in the autumn I should not have much. It was only during the holidays that I sent back the money for the ship-ticket, and by autumn I shall have about 200 roubles. The journey 100, the remainder for the wedding, and what then? Go again to America? That is no business for me, to work and to throw to the winds. Therefore I write to you the exact truth: If you don't come and don't wait for me longer it means that you will not be mine, because I won't return sooner than perhaps on the next holiday of Easter; by no means can I sooner. And you write that you will wait only till autumn, and so the one disagrees with the other. Therefore, I request you, answer me, what will become of us, whether you will come or not,

[1] Allusion to the revolution. The hunters are the Russian authorities and the game the revolutionists—or the contrary.

all the Catholics. Up to the present, thanks to our Lord God and to God's Mother, all is well with us. As to the war, I have nothing to write you, because you know everything there. What you say, having learned from papers and letters, so it is, and I can write you nothing else. If God gives me health and allows me happily to return, I shall have much to relate, but it is impossible to write all this. The fight that lasted for 12 days near Mukden was terrible and obstinate; we fought in it from the beginning to the end. And the end was that we had to retire, because a little more and we should have nowhere to fly; the Japanese encircled us so that only a narrow passage remained through which we fled and the Japanese fired upon us with guns. You know, when we fled thus it could not be without losses; there remained much of everything for the Japanese. Myself, thanks to our Lord God, I got out safe and healthy, and I did not throw away my effects, which I need.

You wrote that we cannot dream about attacking, because as soon as we attack we fly still faster. That we fly is true, but not so fast as you say. We beat them as we like, but they are stubborn and will not give way; so when we are bored with beating them, then we fly. But perhaps we shall fly no more, because we hear that the Japanese have cut us off from Harbin, and we are not so stupid as to fly to Japan.[1]

Now I inform you that I received on April 21 a letter and a package from brother [Ludwik] of Petersburg. In this packet were shoes, sugar, tobacco, and a shirt. I have nothing more to write. . . . .

TEOFIL WOLSKI

442 June 28, 1905

. . . . With us now it is calm. We have been camping for some weeks at the same place and nobody disturbs us; we walk about all the mountains, wherever we like, and we are occupied with learning. We learn how to attack the Japanese. We do also some gymnastics in order to make our bones flexible, which are stiffened from sleeping on the naked ground. We got some fun and training from these occupations, so that now we don't fear much even the Japanese [irony].

[1] An enormous amount of satire developed among the Russian and Polish soldiers during the Japanese war. With the Russians it was an expression of their habit of satirizing their own nation, particularly in matters connected with the state of government. With the Poles, as in this case, it was the expression of a latent and open hostility to Russia.

Well, here it is all right, although it is also sad, because the land is strange, the language is strange, and it is difficult to converse. And so I live and pass my age, and when I remember my nearest, that is you, my dear little brother, and you, sister-in-law, that you have forgot about me already, my heart bursts open with regret and woe. I do not know what I have done, why God the Highest punishes me so much. And this punishment is precisely your forgetfulness about me, poor pilgrim. But nothing can be done; evidently such is my fortune, coming from God, not from anybody else. But at any rate, please answer at least this letter, and inform me whether you received a letter from me and a photograph which I sent you, I don't know how long ago. Now, with me nothing new has happened. I live simply, according to God's will. And just now I send you this sheet of paper and I send you also my heartiest wishes for this solemn holiday, i.e., Christmas, and I divide with you this great token, i.e., this piece of wafer, and may God bless you.[1] . . . .

TEOFIL WOLSKI

445 March 18 [1914]

MY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW: . . . . And now further, my dearest, I do not know how it is, but it is strange that you forgot me so soon and you don't even wish to write a letter to me. I do not merit this. I should willingly do everything for you, but now it is difficult; I cannot help you at all. Therefore I am not even willing to write this letter, because I would indeed help you a little, but there is no possibility. It is now so difficult to earn a little money—God forbid [help us!]. It is already the second year since everyone is trying only to save his own life and there are many people who die from hunger. I feel so ill myself that I don't know what to do. If

[1] A purely sentimental manifestation of the familial attitude. Familial affection seems to be here as in other examples (Kalinowicz and Wickowski series) the last substitute for a disappearing familial solidarity. It is either the most persistent element of solidarity, or the new form which familial connection assumes when a process of individualization has destroyed the primitive unity of the group. The second supposition seems more probable if we remember the evolution which familial attitudes undergo when the married couple with children becomes isolated from the rest of the family, and further that there are few signs of affection within the family in the primitive sense, that affection is not necessary to produce the familial unity, as is shown by the rapid assimilation of new members, and that the relation between members of the family is determined by the degree of kinship, not by individual selection.

or perhaps you will wait a year still. And now I will write you further that you have done a stupid thing by sending that letter to Kowalski. He is a brute, not a man, he was not even worth receiving that letter, and not worth what I have paid for two letters from him which I received, because he wrote to me now and was quarreling and blustering, as if anybody were afraid of him, and all this because of you. You ought not to wear your cloak on both shoulders [practice duplicity]. I sent [that letter] to you in order that you might know, and you sent it back to him. Now he writes silly things to me. I don't praise this in you. But now no matter; it is done and cannot be undone, so I bid you goodbye. I embrace you and kiss you. Embrace everybody in my name.[1] Now goodbye.

Loving you,

TEOFIL WOLSKI

444 December 12, 1909

MY DEAREST BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW: . . . . I don't know what it means that you forgot so soon about me, orphan [that I am]. How can I call myself, if not an orphan? You know from your own experience that everybody among you is in his own country and on his own piece of land and defends himself against his poverty with God's help. But what do you think about me? What pleasure have I? As soon as God helped me to grow a little they took me in that far world, and what I suffered there I have related to you already [when I saw you], and I will not write about it, because no writer could describe all my ups and downs. Then I came here to this America.

[1] The letter is a very good example of the typical relation between love and economic considerations. We see these factors equilibrated more or less without the subordination of either of them. The love is strong enough to make the man wait indefinitely for the girl and not to consider dowry, but considerations of the future economic situation put a determined limit to the sacrifice which he is ready to make. This equilibration in various proportions is found in most of the marriages in Poland. But in the old country, marriage is conditioned by social factors more than by individual considerations, and the relation between the economic and the sentimental motives is never so plain and isolated as it is here. Teofil is, at the time when this letter is written, almost completely outside of his family and his native, social environment—more so than his cousin Adam Raczkowski, because of his longer military service, his participation in the war, and his solitude in America. Therefore social considerations cease to play any determining part in his attitude toward marriage, and the individual factors—economic welfare and personal preference—remain alone to determine his choice.

We have here a case of familial attitudes quite untouched by emigration. The writer seems to represent as perfectly as possible the *ideal* of a peasant girl according to the traditional norms. There is scarcely anything in her behavior that could be blamed from the traditional standpoint, but also hardly any tendency to go beyond this traditional standpoint. Compare her in this respect with the more self-conscious Frania Osińska

THE FAMILY REMBIEŃSKI

Rembieński
His wife
Aleksandra } his daughters
Stasia }
Julka, sister of Rembieński's wife
Kubarz, her husband
Olcia, their daughter
Karolska, sister of Rembieński (or of his wife)
Her husband
Mańka, a cousin of Aleksandra

446–48, ALEKSANDRA REMBIEŃSKA, IN AMERICA, TO FAMILY-MEMBERS IN POLAND

446 BROOKLYN, N.Y., October 14 [1911]

MY DEAR FAMILY:[1] In the first words "Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

And now, dear parents, I inform you that I am in good health, thanks to God, which I wish you also with my truest heart. And now I am on duty [a maidservant] and I do well, I have fine food, only I must work from 6 o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock at night and I

[1] The use of the word "family" instead of "parents" may be either a provincialism or an individual expression, but certainly it has no particular meaning with regard to the conception of the family.

I had money enough I would return to my country, but for the time being it is difficult to gather so much money, and therefore I must suffer poverty for some time. God only knows how long this will last. We know only that when this man who now, since the 4th of March, is on the throne, became president, we all were glad that there would be work enough. Meanwhile it turns out otherwise, because for poor people the times are getting worse than before. All the prices increase and work is paid less than formerly, and moreover this work cannot be got. And then in our papers it is written that there in our country some mean agents are going around and claiming that in America now work is better than ever before. These agents persuade the people to go and everybody leaves his last possibility of earning his life, sometimes even robs his family and comes here, but why, he does not know himself. Perhaps he seeks his own hunger-death, as many cases happen where in the morning corpses are found lying in the streets and after cutting them open [physicians] come to the conclusion that they died from hunger. So don't listen to these "catch-people." They are sent by the ship-companies, and are well paid to gather passengers who will pay such high rates for the tickets. You must know that a ticket now costs about $60, i.e., 120 roubles. Those agents know that people enough went to America, but they do not know how [otherwise] to take this hard-earned money away from those poor people and therefore they use such means. Let nobody listen to anybody but only to his relatives whom he has here, in this golden America.

Now I request you to inform me what is the news in your country. How is the winter there? With us it is very light. And what about the young men and girls who got married? Who is dead, who lives?

When I receive a letter from you I will send you my photograph. Now we say goodbye to you, dear brother and sister-in-law, and we embrace and kiss millions of times yourselves and your children.

Your brother, loving to the grave,

T. Wolski and Stefan Kuczborski[1]

[1] A friend, who signs as a means of "sending his regards."

patient and wait. I would take her now, but in winter there is no such work as in spring. And now, dear parents, you may hope that I will send you for Christmas 10 roubles. I would not send them but, thanks to God, I have some, and I have work, so every month money comes to me. I only ask our Lord Jesus for health, and then no bad fortune will overtake me. I go dressed like a lady only I am sad, because I must remain at home and cannot go outside at all. I am not far away from Uncle and Auntie Kubacz, but I cannot see them more than twice a month. Olcia is in service like me and also can see nobody more than twice a month; but she is far away, she must come on the street-car. When we meet together a young man comes directly to us. Now, dear parents, for girls there is work in America, but not for men. Mańka wrote to me a letter also and she wrote to [illegible name] that they had sent him a ship-ticket. But I once heard Mańka say [perhaps jestingly] that Aunt Julka is in the habit of having a good time with other men, and so maybe Mańka is a mischief-maker.[1]

Now, dear parents, I write to you, that you may give nobody my address. When you receive my letter, hide it, in order that nobody may catch the address. And I request you, tell auntie not to give my address to anybody.[2]

Dear parents, I am very sorry; are you indeed angry with Aunt Karolska? What is the trouble? Tell me, do you visit them? Now I beg you, there is no reason for you to be angry; you can call on them, and I will be more than glad to hear that you are not angry.

And now, dear parents, I will write you that I have an opportunity to be married. I have a fine boy, because uncle and auntie have known him for 3 years. He is good, not a drunkard, he does not swear, as others often do. From him I have not yet heard a single bad word or oath; he has not this habit. I don't know whether I shall marry this year or not—just as you advise me, my parents. He wishes that it may be now, and he begs uncle and auntie because he is boarding with them. I don't like in him that he is as small as

[1] The passage is not clear. The general meaning is that Mańka is a joker and that she perhaps wrote this also as a joke and the man thinks it is true.

[2] It is not clear why she does not want her address to be known. Perhaps being a maidservant, she does not want anybody to come to her, and perhaps she does not want any "boys" to write to her in view of her probable marriage and the possible jealousy of the man.

have $13 a month. And now, dear parents, I implore you don't grieve about me, thinking that I am without money. When I read those letters—because there came four letters in a single week, 2 from Auntie Karolska, 2 from you dear parents, on the same day—so when I read those letters I became very sad, that there in our country is trouble between you, my parents, and the Karolskis. Why do you mind what I say to her? She urged me to send money to her, and not to you and so I sent it to her, but not my last money, only that which I sent. I had still some 10 or 20 roubles, but I wrote intentionally to auntie [that the money I sent was my last]. And you thought, dear parents that I sent my last money away.[1] But you know yourselves that I cannot remain without a cent, because I am in the world [among strangers]. I almost laughed about your sorrow. As it is I have spent more than 50 roubles on myself for the coming winter, and nevertheless I am not so beautifully dressed as all the others. Only I regret to spend money, I prefer to put it away rather than to buy luxurious dresses, like Olcia Kubaczówna who buys herself a new dress every week and doesn't look at money and doesn't think what can happen. She thinks only how to dress and says she does not need to think about anything more. But I am not of the same opinion; I think about my home. I have brothers and sisters and I intend to help them all to come to America.[2] First I will take Stasia, let her hope to come in the early spring, about Easter, and let her be

[1] She had to send the money to her aunt and uncle first because she had borrowed it from them to pay for her journey. The difference in her behavior toward her aunt, whom she tells that she cannot send any more because it is her last money, and toward her parents, whom she asks not to be anxious because she has still a little money left shows very well the different degrees of nearness in the familial relation. We see the eagerness with which the girl desires the good relations between her parents and her aunt and uncle to be re-established, and we find later that her affection toward her aunt is very real. And further, the fact that the parents have quarreled with the aunt because they think that their daughter has wronged herself to fulfil her aunt's desire, is a proof that the familial affection of parents to children is closer than that between brothers and sisters. This is the traditional situation. Only recently we find contrary cases. (Cf., for example, Krupa series.) On the other hand, if the girl had neglected her familial duties toward her aunt, the parents would certainly have sided with the aunt; this is also traditional, and we find also only recently, as a result of another process of evolution, the complete isolation of the marriage-group as against the rest of the family.

[2] An instructive contrast. The cousin Olcia is already partly Americanized. Her parents have lived for a long time in Brooklyn and own a house there.

they wouldn't pay me more than $12. And now I am in another place, only far away from uncle, for it is necessary to travel an hour to uncle; but uncle comes to meet me every second Sunday. I am well enough, I receive now $16 for this month. I don't feel lonesome, because there are two of us girls in this household. The master and mistress are Polish. We are near a church and they send us every Sunday at 6 o'clock in the morning to the mass. We have every day 18 rooms to clean, and to cook and to wash linen. It is myself who wash every week about 300 pieces of linen, and iron it. But I have easy washing because I don't wash with my hands; the machine washes alone, I only cover the linen with soap and put 5 pieces into the machine at once. After 15 minutes I take them out and put in new ones, and so by noon I wash all the 300 pieces. I iron 4 days, from 6 [A.M.] to 8 P.M. I do nothing but iron for those 4 days. Dear parents, you admonish me so severely to be on my guard. But I cannot and do not walk about the city. I cannot even go out before the house for a while. I am in America and I do not even know whether it is America, only it seems to me as if there were only a single house in the whole world and nothing more, only walls and very few people. Now you ask about this young man about whom I wrote, whether he is a Catholic. Well, he has been boarding with the Felikses for probably 2 years, and when I was with them I have seen. He says his prayer and wears a cross on his breast. I hope I am not yet so stupid as not to know with whom I have to speak. He is even from a country not far away from ours, government and district of Łomża. And now, dear [sister] Stasia, don't think that I will hurry and have the wedding the soonest possible; perhaps there will be no wedding at all. Don't forget to get ready and come. It will be more lively when we are both together. You ask for my photograph. I have none ready. I will send you one in December. I will go soon to a photographer. And now, dear parents, don't think that I am with nobody to care about me. I have a good uncle and auntie; I did not expect they would be so good. They care about me as about their own child; they will allow nobody to do me any wrong. When I go to them I am as bold and grateful, as in my own parental home, but still more so. If you don't believe me, then, dear family, please ask uncle and auntie. They will tell you that it is true.

And now, dear family, I have nothing more to write, but only I send you low bows and wish you every good.

Antek Łada. He is pretty, that is true. Wait a little; for Christmas we will send you a photograph; then you will see him. As to what I wrote about your photograph, you need not send it, because it will be very expensive. And now, dear parents, I beg you so very much, let nobody learn that I am going to be married and that I have a young man. Let only my family [yourselves] know everything, no other people, neither brothers nor sisters. I beg you, let nobody know what I wrote in this letter. Say only "She wrote nothing; all's well," and let that be all. Don't say anything about this matter. And when I send the photograph, hide it also, please, so that nobody may see it.[1]

And now I have nothing more to write, and I bow to you, dear family, and I wish you every good. May God grant that this letter finds you in good health, and I ask you for a quick answer. . . . .

ALEKSANDRA REMBIEŃSKA

And I request you, dear parents, send letters with stamps, because I have great difficulties. A letter with a stamp arrives sooner.

447

O DEAR FAMILY [PARENTS], I write this letter to you on November 20, and I got your letter on November 20, and I begin this letter with the words [usual greeting]. And now, dear family, I inform you that I am in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and I wish to you also happiness, health, and good success. And now, dear family, I let you know that in October I did not work for two weeks because I did not like to work for nothing, and I left this place because

[1] Her whole attitude in this matter of marriage shows a slight modification of the tradition, but just to the degree necessitated by the changed conditions of life. She asks for her parents' "advice" as to the time when she should marry, and expresses her readiness to comply with their wish, but she does it with some consciousness of her independence and assumes that the parents will not object to her marrying as soon as she wishes. As to her choice, evidently her parents, not knowing the man, cannot control it personally, and she does not ask them literally for permission to marry this man; but she tries to justify her choice and appeals to the opinion of her uncle and aunt, who under the circumstances are better representatives of the will of the family than the parents. Her wish to keep the engagement secret is justified by the changed conditions of courtship. While in the old country the whole process of courting is necessarily a public affair and leads to a certain degree of social obligation to keep the engagement, here this process is going on almost privately, the engagement may be broken at any moment without important consequences, and therefore the girl does not like to have it known beforehand.

my address; you can give it to him.[1] You wrote to me that he said that our Lord God punished him because he did not take me. It is not true. He did not do me any wrong. I pity him very much. You ask me whether my address is the same. It is the same and it will never change, and secondly, the Kubaczs have lived already 10 years at the same place and the address is the same. And now, dear auntie, please don't be angry with me for not answering directly, for I have no time, neither in the day nor the evening. I am always busy. And now, dear auntie, I thank you very much for the news, for now I know everything. You ask about that young man, what happened. Nothing happened, only it is so that I did not wish to marry him, because I don't wish to marry at all; I will live alone through this my life to the end. He is a good fellow, nothing can be said, his name is Tomasz Zylowski. He wants it to be in summer, after Easter, but I don't think about marrying, I will suffer alone to the end in this world.[2] O dear auntie, I write you that I have nothing to write, only I ask you for a quick answer. And now I beg you, auntie, write me what happened with [two illegible names of boy and girl]. I wish you a merry holiday of Easter time. O dear God, why cannot I be with auntie and divide the egg together with parents and brothers and sisters! When I recall all this, I would not be sorry if I had to die right now. Dear auntie, Mańka wrote to me a letter; Jabłońska with [illegible masculine name] will come to the Kubaczs.

[ALEKSANDRA REMBIEŃSKA]

[1] Because her relation with the other suitor is interrupted.

[2] A typical momentary reaction to a disappointment. See her allusion to dying at the end, where this disappointment is combined with the feeling of loneliness.

I have received the photograph, for which I thank you very heartily, and I will send you soon an American one, with this young man. And now I have nothing to write, only I greet you, parents, and brothers and sisters, and I wish you all health and happiness. I greet also Aunt Karolska and ask and beg her pardon. Let her not be angry with me, but I had no time to write another letter particularly to auntie. Be so good, auntie, and accept from my parents this same letter, because I should write to you the same as to my parents. I have nothing more to write, only I ask you, auntie, for a speedy answer, and I beg you once more, auntie, let nobody know from these letters about the young man. I request you, dear parents, give this whole letter to auntie to read.

[ALEKSANDRA REMBIEŃSKA]

448 Year 1912

O DEAR AUNTIE: I received your letter on February 20 and I write you on February 25. Dear auntie, you wrote 3 letters and I know nothing about them; I received only this one. O dear auntie, you write to me that I either don't wish to write or that I have forgotten [you]. O dear auntie, I will not forget until my death. I write letters, one to auntie and the other to my parents. Perhaps somebody has intercepted those letters at the post-office and does not give them to you. Now, dear auntie, I inform you that I am in good health, thanks to our Lord God, which I wish also to you, dear auntie. May God help you the best; may I always hear that you are doing well; I shall be very glad then. And now dear auntie, I inform you that I am in the same place in service with an English[-speaking] master and mistress who don't know a word of Polish, and I don't know English; so we communicate with gestures and I know what to do, that's all. I know the work and therefore I don't mind much about the language. But, dear auntie, I went intentionally into an English household in order that I may learn to speak English, because it is necessary, in America, as the English language reigns. I am in good health, only I am a little ill with my feet, I don't know what it is, whether rheumatism or something else. I walk very much, because from 6 o'clock in the morning till 10 o'clock in the evening I have work and I receive $22 a month, and I have 7 persons, and 16 rooms to clean, and I cook; everything is on my head. And now, dear auntie, you wrote to me about Staś Filinak that he wished to know

450 January 1, 1902

DEAR PARENTS: . . . . I send you, my dear parents, my photographs, 5 copies. So please, give my aunt Klemensowa that one in which I am with Marta, and leave the other with yourself. From these 3 [where I am alone] give one to the Butkowski's [uncle], the other to whom you wish, and keep the third. For perhaps we shall see one another soon, and perhaps not, so you will have me at least upon this dead paper. But please don't grieve about me; perhaps I have saddened your heart with this letter [the preceding sentence], but, thanks to God we are still alive. I beg you, father and mother, give [money] for a holy mass, for, as you know, in America everything is hypocritical [the priests and their prayers]. As to the apparition, about which you wrote, that in America our Lord Jesus manifested Himself, don't believe in it. Whoever tells you it you may spit into his eyes [as a liar]. It is not true. Those images which are reproduced in your country—don't care for them, for it's not true. So don't believe in it, because it is not valid, it is invented by people. Why, we in America would know it better than they know there in our country. It happened only thus, that in one town, in a church, upon an image above the altar dew appeared. This image was painted red, so people who came to the church early in the morning said that it was blood, while it was not blood, only dew.[1] . . . .

KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI

451 February 17, 1902

DEAREST PARENTS: . . . . I inform you that I have sent a ship-ticket for Antoni. . . . . Expect to receive it soon. . . . . And remember, Antoni, don't show your papers to anybody, except in

[1] The man is very religious (cf. letter No. 454, where he asks for scapularies, rosaries, etc.) and his unbelief with regard to the alleged miracle is not the result of any critical attitude toward miracles in general, but merely the negation of a particular fact which might have happened elsewhere at some other moment. The background of this negation is clearly the idea that no such miracle can happen in America where "everything is hypocritical." For the same reason he asks for a mass to be said in Poland, not in America. The underlying assumption is that the efficiency of religious values depends upon the moral perfection of the men who manipulate them. This attitude corresponds to the moral-religious system as against the magical one. (Cf. Introduction: "Religious and Magical Attitudes.") It is the attitude which makes possible the whole "Zaranie movement," to be treated in Vol. IV.

BUTKOWSKI SERIES

We have here another example of traditional attitudes almost perfectly preserved in emigration—this time in a young man. In this case, as in that of Rembieńska, the familial relations at home were particularly strong, and this is evidently the main reason why the dissolution comes so slowly. (Cf. introduction to the Raczkowski series.) We notice also that the familial feelings seem a little weaker in Antoni than in Konstanty. As we have no further data as to their past we may conjecture that the difference is one of individual character.

449–61, KONSTANTY AND ANTONI BUTKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, TO THEIR PARENTS, IN POLAND

449 SOUTH CHICAGO, December 6, 1901

DEAR PARENTS: I send you my lowest bow, as to a father and mother, and I greet you and my brothers with these words: "Praised be Jesus Christus," and I hope in God that you will answer me, "For centuries of centuries. Amen."

And now I wish you, dearest parents, and you also, dearest brother, to meet the Christmas eve and merry holidays in good health and happiness. May God help you in your intentions. Be merry, all of you together. [Health and success; letter received.] I could not answer you at once, for you know that when one comes from work he has no wish to occupy himself with writing [particularly] as I work always at night. . . . . I sent you money, 100 roubles, on November 30. I could not send more now, for you know that winter is coming and I must buy clothes. I inform you that Marta has no work yet. She will get work after the holidays, and it may happen that she will marry. . . . . I inform you about Jasiek, my brother, that he wrote me a letter from Prussia asking me to take him to America, but he is still too young. Inform me about Antoni, how his health is, for in the spring I will bring him to me. I will send him a ship-ticket, if God grants me health. [Greetings for family and relatives.]

[KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI]

writers are to write you may as well not send letters, for I won't read them, only I will throw them into the fire, for I cannot understand. I beg you, describe to me about our country, how things are going on there. And please don't be angry with me for this which I shall write. I write you that it is hard to live alone, so please find some girl for me, but an orderly [honest] one, for in America there is not even one single orderly girl.[1] . . . .

KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI

453 December 21 [1902]

I, your son, Konstanty Butkowski, inform you, dear parents, about my health. . . . . I thank you kindly for your letter, for it was happy. As to the girl, although I don't know her, my companion, who knows her, says that she is stately and pretty, I believe him, as well as you, my parents. For although I don't know her, I ask you, my dear parents, and as you will write me so it will be well. Shall I send her a ship-ticket, or how else shall I do? Ask Mr. and Mrs. Sadowski [her parents], what they will say. And I beg you, dear parents, give them my address and let them write a letter to me, then I shall know with certainty. And write me, please, about her

[1] Although it is not entirely clear, even to themselves, what immigrants mean when they say that Polish girls "get totally spoiled" in America, that they are not "orderly," etc., the main point is probably the more or less clear consciousness that the girls lose the character which they ought to possess in conformity with the family spirit—that they are too much individualized. This implies more than mere emancipation from the supremacy of man and more than is implied in the explicit reproaches of the men—a tendency to amusement, to infidelity, to finery, etc., though it implies these features also.

At this point—in the allusion to Marta, to illegible letters—and in the earlier allusion to the corruption of religion in America, the writer shows an exasperation not adequately expressed in the translation. It is the result of the awakened consciousness of the disharmony between the man's present individualistic and his former familial environment. The feeling of loneliness must be particularly strong in a man of his psychology when removed from the family-group, and marriage appears here as a substitute for the family in its primitive form and not, as it is in the old country, a widening of the primitive family-group. In Poland the substitution of the marriage-group for the family-group goes on much more slowly, and mainly in city life. The internal evolution—loss of the sentiment of familial solidarity—keeps pace with the slower evolution of the external conditions. But in America the change of external conditions is always in advance of the change of attitudes, and therefore in the present case the substitution of the marriage-group for the family-group is not accompanied by the loss of familial feelings.

places where you must show them. . . . . And if you receive the ticket soon, don't wait, but come at once. And if you receive it a week or so before Easter, then don't leave until after the holidays. But after the holidays don't wait; come at once. . . . . And send me a telegram from the Castle Garden. You won't pay much, and I shall know and will go to the railway-station. Take 15 roubles with you, it will be enough, and change them at once for Prussian money. As to the clothes, take the worst which you have, some three old shirts, that you may have a change on the water. And when you come across the water happily, then throw away all these rags. Bring nothing with you except what you have upon yourself. And don't bring any good shoes either, but everything the worst. As to living, take some dry bread and much sugar, and about half a quart of spirits, and some dry meat. You may take some onions, but don't take any cheese. . . . . And be careful in every place about money. Don't talk to any girls on the water. . . . . Learn in Bzory when Wojtek will come, for he comes to the same place where I am, so you would have a companion. And about Jan Płonka, if he wants to come, he is not to complain about [reproach] me for in America there are neither Sundays nor holidays; he must go and work. I inform [him] that I shall receive him as my brother. If he wishes he may come. . . . .

[KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI]

452 November 11 [1902]

DEAREST PARENTS: . . . . Now I inform you about Antoni, that he is working in Chicago; it costs 15 cents to go to him. He is boarding, as well as Marta, with acquaintances, with Malewski. He has an easy and clean work, but he earns only enough to live, for he is unable to do heavy work. I see them almost every evening. I go to them. And Marta works in a tailor-shop, but she refuses to listen to me, else she would have been married long ago. So I inform you that I loved her as my own sister, but now I won't talk to her any more, for she refuses to listen. Family remains family only in the first time after coming from home, and later they forget and don't wish any more to acknowledge the familial relations; the American meat inflates them.

I have nothing more to write, except that we are all in good health. Moreover, I declare about your letters, give them to somebody else to write, for neither wise nor fool can read such writing. If such

455 March 28, 1903

DEAR PARENTS: . . . . I sent the ship-ticket on March 26, and I sent to you, father, 20 roubles of money, so you may give her some for the journey. So I commit myself to you, father and mother, for I don't know her. I inform you, dear parents, that not one, but thousands of girls come here to America, get married, live a month or a year or two, and then some scoundrel persuades her and she runs away with him into the world. Thousands of such cases happen. So my dearest parents, I commit myself to you. I embrace you and kiss your hands and I beg your pardon, dear parents, and you, dearest brothers, and my whole family for hazarding myself in such an undertaking. I don't know how God and the Holiest Mother will help me, for it is neither for a year nor for two, but for my whole life. Don't think, father and mother, that when I marry, I shall forget you. Oh no! Whenever I can I will always help you in any case.

As to Sadowska, I have described in my letter to her how she should arrange everything. . . . . And if they ask her to whom she is going, let her answer, to her brother . . . . Konstanty Butkowski. [Similar advice to his brother.]

KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI

456 June 13 [1902]

DEAREST PARENTS: . . . . Konstanty works in the same factory as before and earns $2 a day. I have yet no work, but don't be anxious about me, dear parents . . . . for I came to a brother and uncle, not to strangers. If our Lord God gives me health, I shall work enough in America. [News about friends and relatives.] Now I inform you, dear parents, about Władysława Butkowska [cousin]. She lives near us, we see each other every day. She is a doctor's servant. And this doctor has left his wife in Chicago and came to South Chicago. She cooks for him, and she is alone in his house, so people talk about her, that she does not behave well. He pays her $5 a week. I don't know whether it is true or not, but people talk thus because he has left his wife. . . . .[1]

[ANTONI BUTKOWSKI]

[1] In Poland the girl would not venture to take or keep such a place in the face of public opinion.

age and about everything which concerns her. I don't need to enumerate; you know yourselves, dear parents. For to send a ship-ticket it is not the same as to send a letter which costs a nickel; what is done cannot be undone. So I beg you once more, as my loving parents, go into this matter and do it well, that there may be no cheating. . . . . I shall wait for your letter with great impatience, that I may know what to do. . . . .[1]

KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI

Please inform me, which one is to come, whether the older or the younger one, whether Aleksandra or Stanisława. Inform me exactly.

454 February 14, 1903

DEAREST PARENTS: . . . . As to the Sadowskis, I wrote them a letter, and I inform you that I shall send her a ship-ticket, for they wrote me a letter and all this pleased me very much. So in March I will send her a ship-ticket, but I will wait until you answer this letter, my parents. I will send the ticket to her address. As to the money for the journey, they could give it to her, and if not, I will send it for her, but to your address. As to Jasiek, I inform you, let him not risk coming, for he is still too young. Here in Chicago work is very hard. . . . . Even Antoni scarcely earns for his living, and you write me to take that one. Let him wait at least 2 years, for Antoni has not worked during the whole winter. He would work for 3 days and sit for a month. For you know that here in America one must always work; there is no rest. He has time enough.

And now I inform you that if she comes to me let her bring a belt consecrated to St. Franciscus, one scapulary consecrated to the Immaculate Conception of Mary and two consecrated to God's Mother of Sorrows, and one *koronka* [arrangement of prayers differing from the rosary] consecrated to the Immaculate Conception. And let her bring also one of those booklets with flower-patterns for embroidery. . . . .

KONSTANTY BUTKOWSKI

[1] In spite of the fact that the parents are to select the girl, the marriage is here no longer the familial matter it was traditionally. Its aim is here purely individual. The parents are required to select in view of their son's personal happiness, and the girl, who by emigrating will be isolated from her family, is taken into consideration rather as an individual than as a family-member. We find here the intermediary type between familial and properly individual marriage; the form remains familial but the content is already individualistic. In selecting a stress is put upon the family from which the girl comes, not because the alliance with this family is more or less desired, but mainly because the nature of the family forms a basis for conclusions as to the character of the individual.

right to receive this money. So now I beg you, dear parents, send an authorization and his birth-certificate to my uncle, Piotr Z., for I am still a minor and cannot appear in an American lawsuit. When he joined his association he insured himself for $1,000 . . . . and made a will in your favor, dear parents. But you cannot get it unless you send an authorization to our uncle, for the lawsuit will be here, and it would be difficult for you to get the money [while remaining] in our country, while we shall get it soon and we will send it to you, dear parents. So now, when you receive this letter, send us the papers soon. Only don't listen to stupid people, but ask wise people. . . . .

Now I inform you, dear parents, that strange peop e will write to you letters. Answer each letter, and answer thus, that you commit everything to Piotr Z. For they will try to deceive you, asking to send the authorization to them. But don't listen to anybody . . . . only listen to me, as your son; then you will receive money paid for your son and my brother. [Repeats the advice; wishes from the whole family.]

Now I beg you, dear parents, don't grieve. For he is no more, and you won't raise him, and I cannot either. For if you had looked at him, I think your heart would have burst open with sorrow [he was so mutilated]. But in this letter I won't describe anything, how it was with him. It killed him on April 20.[1] In the next letter I shall describe to you everything about the funeral. . . . . Well, it is God's will; God has wished thus, and has done it. Only I beg you, dear parents, give for a holy mass, for the sake of his soul. And he will be buried beautifully, on April 22.

[Antoni Butkowski]

459 April 26 [1903]

Now I, Antoni Butkowski, speak to you, dearest parents, and to you, my brothers, with these words: "Praised be Jesus Christus."

Now I inform you, dearest parents, and you, my brothers, that Konstanty, your son, dearest parents, and your brother and mine, my brothers, is no more alive. It killed him in the foundry, it tore him in eight parts, it tore his head away and crushed his chest to a mass and broke his arms. But I beg you, dear parents, don't weep and don't grieve. God willed it so and did it so. It killed him on April 20, in the morning and he was buried on April 22. He was

[1] For the use of "it" in this connection, cf. Jackowski series, No. 254.

457 CHICAGO, December 31, 1902

DEAR PARENTS: . . . . If Konstanty wrote you to send him a girl answer him that he may send a ship-ticket either to the one from Popów or to the one from Grajewo. Let the one come which is smarter, for he does not know either of them, so send the one which pleases you better. For in America it is so: Let her only know how to prepare for the table, and be beautiful. For in America there is no need of a girl who knows how to spin and to weave. If she knows how to sew, it is well. For if he does not marry he will never make a fortune and will never have anything; he wastes his work and has nothing. And if he marries he will sooner put something aside. For he won't come back any more. In America it is so: Whoever does not intend to return to his country, it is best for him to marry young; then he will sooner have something, for a bachelor in America will never have anything, unless he is particularly self-controlled.[1] [Greetings, wishes, etc.]

ANTONI BUTKOWSKI

458 SOUTH CHICAGO, April 21, 1903

Now I, Antoni, your son, my dearest parents, and my uncle and the whole family, we inform you that your son Konstanty is no longer alive. He was killed in the foundry [steel-mills]. Now I inform you, dear parents, that he was insured in an association for $1,000.[2] His funeral will cost $300. And the rest which remains, we have the

[1] The emphasis by Antoni of the business side of marriage is probably an individual feature. Konstanty does not mention the economic side at all.

[2] The immediate passage from the news of death to business seems to show a particular coldness in the brother. But it is probably rather a lack of tact in letter-writing, due to his youth. The letter is written on the second day after Konstanty's death, and this day was probably mainly devoted to business conferences of the family; so the business problems are put first. At any rate, it is not a proof of egotism, since Antoni has no personal benefit to expect. Further, we find here in an exaggerated form a typical peasant attitude. No grief, however great, interferes for a long time with the peasant's practical activity. This is a consequence of the fact that, as we have noted more than once, the peasant's psychology is essentially practical; reflection or sentimental brooding always requires a particular effort and particularly favorable external circumstances, and therefore, in whatever situation, it is the practical side, the point from which activity can start, which naturally tends to occupy the first place. Finally, there is for the peasant nothing mean or low in economic questions in comparison with other and higher interests. Cf. Osiński series, letters of Baranowski.

had boarded with him for a month. And if God gives me health, perhaps in the autumn I shall come to our country and tell you everything. . . . . As to the company in which Konstanty worked, we don't know how it will be. If they give us $2,000 by good will, we will agree, but if not, we intend a lawsuit But I won't wait for the end of the suit, for in America a suit may last 5 or 7 years. And for a killed man the company cannot be sued for more than $5,000. Then the lawyer will take one half, and will give the other half to us, for such are the laws in America. . . . .

And about Sadowska, let her not come, for when she comes to New York they will send her back. For now it is so, that when anybody comes to New York he must send a telegram to the person to whom he is going. And now, when he is dead, they won't admit her. They know already that he is dead, for we have been in that ship-agent's office, wanting to return the ticket. But it was already delivered. The agent told us that she should not come. If she wants it absolutely, let her come; but it will be in vain, for she will be sent back. And if she does not come, let her send the ship-ticket back to us. . . . .

ANTONI BUTKOWSKI

461 July 23 [1903]

DEAREST PARENTS AND BROTHERS: . . . . I inform you that we have received already the money from the association on July 22, and on the same day we sent you 800 roubles. As to the rest, we had to give the lawyer $100, and uncle took $300 for the funeral, and the rest remained with me. I inform you, dear parents, that they did not want to pay the money, only we had to take a lawyer. As to the company, we gave the affair up to a lawyer, for we could not come to an understanding. They offered us only $300 by good will, while by law they must pay some thousands. . . . . But I won't wait; I think that on August 25 I shall be at home. . . . .

ANTONI BUTKOWSKI

buried beautifully. His funeral cost $225, the casket $60. Now when we win some [money] by law from the company, we will buy a place and transfer him that he may lie quietly, we will surround him with a fence and put a cross, stone, or iron upon his grave. This will cost some $150. For his work, let him at least lie quietly in his own place. It is so, dear parents: Perhaps we shall receive from the [insurance] society $1,000, and from the company we don't know how much, perhaps 2,000, perhaps 3,000, and perhaps 1,000. . . . . Whatever we receive, after paying all the expenses I will send you the rest, dear parents, and I will come myself to my country. . . . . And let Aleksandra not come now, let her send the ship-ticket back and we will send her the money which he promised her. And don't give her these 20 roubles. Once more I tell you, dear parents, don't listen to anybody, to any letters which anybody will write to you, but listen to me, your son. I cannot close the door myself before lawyers. Some advise well, others still better, but I have a wise man. And now I tell you, dear parents, read this note, which is cut out of a paper; you will know who is guilty of his death. But nothing can be done, dear parents. Don't weep, for you won't raise him any more. For if you had looked upon him, I don't know what would have become of you.[1] . . . .

ANTONI BUTKOWSKI

460 May 20 [1903]

DEAREST PARENTS AND BROTHERS: . . . . I received your letter on May 18, for which I thank you kindly and heartily, for I learned at least about your health, that you are all in good health. For when I received that letter by telegram, I grieved much when you wrote that you were losing your reason. But I beg you, dear parents, don't grieve and don't weep, for you won't raise him any more. We regret him and grieve still more, for we have looked at him during 3 days, and now still at whatever we look, that was left after him our heart fills with grief. About his funeral I cannot describe everything, but he was buried beautifully. Now I inform you, dear parents, that Stefan Zal. went back to our country. When he comes there try to meet him, and he will relate to you everything, for Konstanty

[1] In this letter the disproportion between the sentimental and the business part is not so great as in the preceding one; the recurring idea is resignation to the fact which cannot be changed and cannot be any basis of practical activity.

hundred three roubles. The three roubles give for a holy mass. And further, dear parents, we inform you, buy yourselves a cow as dear as you wish. Of this money Bronek sends 300 roubles, and Janek 100 roubles. Myself, Antosiek, I do not send you now, dear parents, because, first, I have no money on me, but in the bank, and then I will send you for another time. And you, dear sister, we thank you for your good wishes and for your obedience to our parents. Listen well to the parents, then we will send you money for a good dress. [Usual salutations and ending.]

ANTONI RADWAŃSKI

463 BAYONNE, N.J., January 18, 1913

[Usual greetings and wishes]: And now I inform you, dear parents, I, Antosiek, that I send you money, 250 roubles, and I request you, dear parents, very politely, as soon as you receive this money, leave for yourselves as much as you need for your household, and put the rest where you think it the best, either in a bank or somewhere for the case of any misfortune. I inform you, dear parents, I, Antosiek, about my work. I am working near the fire [furnace], as before. I earn $2.50 a day. Ask Grabowski, he will tell you, what sort of work it is. [Salutations for the whole family.]

[ANTONI]

464 April 9, 1913

. . . . If you want money, dear parents, write, and we will send you for your needs. And now we write to you dear parents, that this Stasiek [the son], of our Szymon Krasnosielski, is a clever boy, so if the news in America is better we will send him a ship-ticket, if he wishes to come, because now work is somewhat bad. Tell this to Szymon and his wife, and let them not regret [what happened]. Perhaps he will get them out of this [situation], if he is willing to work.

And now I, Antosiek, write to you, dear parents, how do you advise me, whether to come to our country or not? Because I have

---

traditional unity of the familial group is changed into a personal connection of its members. In the present case the familial disorganization is only beginning; therefore the moral norm is fully and gladly acknowledged for a time, but finally these demands become "too much." In other cases, as we have seen, the duty becomes gradually more painful until it is finally avoided.

RADWAŃSKI SERIES

In this series the process of individualization goes on rapidly in Janek Radwański, much more slowly in his brother Antoni, and probably does not touch the third brother, who, contrary to the behavior of so many others (cf., for example, Michał Osiński), returns home after a short time to do his military service. Otherwise he could never return, and the attraction of the old country, family, and community proves stronger than the fear of military service and the hope of a career in America.

462–68, ANTONI RADWAŃSKI, IN AMERICA, TO HIS PARENTS, IN POLAND

462 [Second part of a letter. Date cannot be determined, probably end of 1912.]

And further, dear parents, we answer your parental request, where you ask us to send you money. All right, dear parents, we are glad to fulfil your request at every moment and at every hour, everything that you ask us for, because you have brought us up from childhood, and we have leaned upon your favor. The example you gave us in our younger years we keep in our older years, as God ordered. Dearest parents, to whom shall you appeal for help, if not first to God the Highest and to God's Mother of Częstochowa, Queen of heaven and earth, asking for health for you and your loving children, and then to us for help? We will help you at any time, if only God helps us and the Holy Virgin Mary.[1] So we send you money, 403 roubles, four

[1] The moral character of this familial attitude is already a sign of a beginning disintegration of the familial group. Indeed, there is no question of moral obligation and even little consciousness of the attitude in the really primitive familial solidarity; the relation of the individual to the group is not a moral but a social relation, accepted as a matter of fact. The relation assumes a moral form when it is not the only one psychologically possible, and the number and variety of possible relations grow, together with the progress of individualization. Thus, the moral norm appears as a substitute for the immediate solidarity when the

I shall remain longer. And what you write me, dear parents, that if I do not come, the punishment of prison threatens me, I do not mind it and I do not fear it.[1] And now I inform you, dear parents, about sister, and what you wrote about wishing to send her to a dressmaker. You can do it; let her learn. And as to the help, don't be anxious. If only our Lord God gives me health I will help you at every moment. And now I ask about Brother Bronisław. After his arrival in our country we received a letter [from him], and he wrote me that he will be free from military service, so I request you, dearest parents, if you receive this letter, answer me directly, because I am curious about it, and I shall await it with great impatience. And now I inform you, dear parents, about Janek, that we are together, only he asks you for your blessing, because he intends to marry a girl from Przasnysz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leśniewski, who live in Piaski.[2] I pen to you in this letter whatever I can remember. But I have nothing more to write, only I recommend myself to your kind memory and I beg you for a speedy answer. With high respect,

ANTONI RADWAŃSKI

I shake your hands. Goodbye.[3]

467 [January, 1914]

[Beginning of letter missing.] Now about your request, what you ask. We cannot help you, dear parents, in this, because as to me, dear parents, I am somewhat [illegible word], and about Janek it is not necessary to explain to you because he is now intending to marry. The second banns of his marriage were on January 4, so he needs money. I lent him myself $50 for his wedding, and I do not take money from the bank, because I regret to touch it. Then, dear parents, manage it as you can yourself. I will send you [money] later, if our Lord God gives me health. But, dear parents, I think that you are not wronged by me all the same. I help you in the measure of my ability. Not long ago I sent you 50 roubles for your

[1] First conscious, but still only slight, break in obedience.

[2] Janek is the most emancipated of the brothers; he sends the least money home, and decides to marry without consulting his parents.

[3] Shaking hands is a rather disrespectful form of greeting the parents; the normal form is kissing the hands. One of the complaints of old-fashioned parents about the bad influence of emigration is that the children begin to shake hands instead of kissing.

now good work and I would like to marry, and now I don't know what to do.[1]

And now, dear parents, Bronek asks what is the date of his call to military service. He is curious and wants to know whether it was in the past autumn or in the next, or after the next. He thinks of going back to our country, only does not yet know when. He and Janek work together in one plant and I work in another. [Usual ending.]

ANTONI RADWAŃSKI

465 June 25, 1913

. . . . And now we inform you that Czesława [Czesia] Jankowska from Karwacz came and related to us about your success and health, and we were very glad that you are all in good health. She gave us the gift that you sent us, 3 cheeses. So we will send you also a gift, but don't know what kind of a gift you wish from us. Now further, dear parents, you asked us for our photographs; so I, Antosiek, send you my photograph, and some other time we will send you perhaps all three, because we could not now. Janek went to another city, and Bronek says you saw him not long ago. Dear parents, could you send me your photograph? I would send you money, as soon as you write. Only, dear parents, Czesia Jankowska told me that you don't allow me to marry but [ask me] to return home. So I intend to return home, but I do not know when, because now I have good work and wages, $75 a month. Therefore I will still work.[2] [Usual salutations and ending.]

[ANTONI]

466 December 2, 1913

[Usual greetings and Christmas wishes; letter from parents received; thanks.] And another letter I received from Brother Bronisław, in which he writes me to come back to our country. But I do not intend to come back to our country at once, but only in the spring, because up to the present my health is favorable so I think

[1] Acknowledgment of the parental authority, but this becomes more and more formal, as we see in the following letters.

[2] The will of the parents proves ultimately insufficient to influence him, but there is not yet a conscious attempt to get rid of the control of the parents. Up to the present the whole process of emancipation seems to have gone on unconsciously.

I must go and serve in the army. Now I cannot assure you when I shall return to our country. If I knew certainly that I should not go to the army I would go back at the same moment; but I am afraid that if I go to serve it would be still more painful for me than here in America. How do you advise me about it?

And now, dear parents, I inform you about myself and Czesia Jankowska. Once I was there with them and she asked my advice. She had an opportunity to marry a boy before the winter; he wanted to marry her. So she asked my advice about the matter. I answered her: "It depends on your wish." And she said to me that if she had an opportunity to marry such a boy as I am, she wouldn't mind anything. Then I said to her laughing: "Well, let us two marry." Then she proposed that we write to our parents whether we two could not marry.[1] Here is the end of my letter. [Usual ending.]

[ANTONI]

468

[Beginning of the letter with date and greetings missing.] I inform you that I received also a letter from Brother Bronisław, from the army, but not a very cheerful one.

Don't be anxious about your old age, that you will have nothing to live on. Only beg God the Highest and the Holiest Mother for health; and I also will help you at every time. Now also I send you some roubles, although not much, only 35, but I cannot send more, because I must support Janek and his wife. He married and has no work, because work is bad. Janek got a good wife, dear parents, she pleased me very much, she has wisdom; but he has been short of reason—is and will be. The wedding was very nice, be-because I gave him for this wedding $130. If he has a brotherly heart he will give me that back, and if he has a Cainian heart, it will be lost. But nothing can be done. I spent for him $30 when he came from our country, and he did not give them back. And that coat, that shirt, that ribbon and those corals, which Bronisław brought with him, it was I alone who sent them. I bought all that myself.

And now, dear parents, we inform you about our intentions of marriage. With Czesia it would be very well, because we have

[1] His presentation of the matter is as if the plan of marriage arose only incidentally and unintentionally; he wants to diminish his responsibility for the fact, in view of the expressed wish of the parents that he should not marry but return.

needs, although we were all three in America. So, dearest parents, I beg very politely your pardon. Don't be angry for what I write you. I don't remind you of it, because it ought to be so; it is a duty to respect and help one's parents until the last moment of death [life], because so says our Lord Jesus and the Holiest Mother Virgin Mary: "Do not abandon thy parents and remember about them, and I will not forget about thee." I wear this in my heart and I remember. Only, dear parents, you demand too much.[1] You ask for help because you are already in old age and you cannot do heavy work; sister [asks] also, the brothers also, so my work does not suffice for all this. I requested Brother Bronisław very kindly: "Bronuś, little brother, I beg you, remain with us for some time, then we will go back together." I implored him as a brother, but he did not listen to my request and did not heed it. Now he longs and regrets; probably he regrets that for which I begged him so. And he is longing now himself, and to me he causes pain, because I wept over that letter when I read it. He caused regrets to himself and to me also, because after his departure I thought that my heart would burst open. And I request you, send me his address, where he is in service. Now, dear parents, I grieved over this letter which you sent to me recently, that not even money [bribery] can help, but

[1] His attitude seems perfectly correct objectively, and still it is quite different from the traditionally sanctioned one. Here again the moral statement of the situation is a sign of the dissolution of the old immediacy of social attitudes. In the old family-group there can be essentially no opposition between the son's and the parents' economic interests. The property is familial; there is no question of any justice or injustice, obligation, antagonism, or, in general, of any moral or immoral relation in economic matters between any two members of the family as personalities. The parents do not wrong the son in requiring all his earnings to be given to them; the older brother does not wrong his younger brothers or sisters in taking the lion's share of the inheritance if it is he who takes the farm; the children do not wrong the parents when, after retirement of the latter, they refuse to them the right to own anything personally and acknowledge only their right to be supported; etc. In all these cases the relation is that between the part and the whole, not that between independent but connected entities. But, on the other hand, when an individual, as in the present case, is half emancipated, there is still no relation between individuals, but between the individual on one side and the group on the other, and each is right from a different point of view. The parents are right here in asking continually for money, if we take the standpoint of the group; the son is right in refusing to send more than he wishes, if we take the standpoint of the individual. But in the eyes of the individual whose feeling of familial unity has dissolved, the situation assumes the form of a relation between individuals, to be regulated by justice.

DOBIECKI SERIES

The relation between an older and a younger member of a family is broken because of the more rapid evolution of the latter. The uncle here assumes with regard to his nephew, who came later to America, the attitude of familial authority usually assumed by the father. The uncle evidently came to this country when already a mature man and has preserved almost wholly the traditional standpoint. His behavior, as related by himself and by his nephew, shows a tendency to despotism. The boy brought also enough of familial spirit as his first letter shows; but his emancipation has been relatively easy. (Cf. the attitude of Aleksander Wolski in an analogous situation.)

469–73, ANTONI (ANTEK) DOBIECKI, IN AMERICA, TO FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND, AND ONE LETTER (472) FROM THE UNCLE OF ANTONI

469 PHILLIPS, PA., July 16, 1910

[Usual greeting and generalities; letter received]: Now, mother, you write me that you grieve because you cannot pay your debts and you did not pay the money back to brother-in-law. So I send you another 100 roubles. Give back to everybody what you owe, may nobody look angrily at you because of your owing anybody money; get rid of all your debts. Now I inform you that I sent you 100 roubles on July 13. Answer me distinctly with whom you are living. Now I have nothing to write you, only I send you low bows, dear parents. We send also low bows to brother and sister-in-law. I inform you, dear brother, that you manage your household badly if you cannot give our parents enough to live with you, and even two people have no place in your home. It is your wife who walks in the breeches, not you; your wife governs, not you.

talked about it, dear parents, and we have the wish [to marry]. Czesia is a good girl, and wise. She has informed me about everything. If only we could marry, because we know that we are cousins. We are curious what Uncle and Aunt Jankowski say, because they wrote a letter, and I read it, but they wrote us nothing about it. So we beg you very much, speak among yourselves and to uncle and auntie also. We ask for a speedy answer. [End missing.]

[ANTONI]

would credit me with about a dollar on my board, but instead I was obliged to pay all the money that I owed. Afterward he got angry with me because I would not work with him every day, and he told me to go away and to hunt another boarding-house. He thought that I would help him to work, and that he would thus economize and put it in the bank. And now, dear father and mother, I want to ask what about the military service? Write me whether I have to go to our country or how I may do. But now I have no money. Send me the address of the Olszewiakis. I have nothing more of interest to write, only I salute you. [Usual greetings for all the family.] If you don't want me to come back to our country, brother and sister-in-law, then send me your sister Helena.

[ANTONI]

472 October 10, 1911

DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW: . . . . Now I inform you, dear sister and brother-in-law, when you write letters to Antek again don't address them to my name, but to his own, because you know what his name is. He has no uncle now; he is a greater lord than his uncle. I will tell you, dear sister, why I fell out with him—Antek went once to some house where they gave him beer to drink, and came back drunk and made a fool of himself at home. I said to him: "You did not go to the church, but you got drunk, and now you will play comedies!" And he told me I was not his father and should not order him about. Then I got angry with him and struck him one in the face. When he came from our country he came to me as to a mother or father, and now he tells me that I am not his father, that I did not bring him up and have no rights over him. But when he came from our country he did not wander about without work, but he got work on the second day, and he works above [the earth], drives a pair of horses and hauls coal and firewood. And when another comes and has no friend he has to go to the mine and dig coal under the earth. But he has good work, he is not working hard. And when he came from our country he was as blind as myself, he did not understand what is written, black on white; then my wife did not sleep of nights but taught him where is what number on which house, because he did not know where to take coal, to what number. And now he is a greater lord than myself. And when he came from our

Things are bad in a household where the cow shows the way to the ox.[1] [Proverb.]

Now I have nothing more to write you, only I send you low bows, and I send also low bows to sister and brother-in-law, with their children. And I inform you further, dear parents, don't be anxious about the rent. I will send you money and nobody will look angrily at you. . . . .

[ANTONI DOBIECKI]

470 September 26

. . . . And now I inform you that in America things are very bad. Work is bad and living is very dear. We are working 5 days in a week. We earn hardly more than enough to live. You write me to send you a photograph. I will send you a photograph, but only when I have money; then I will send you money and the photograph together, because if I sent you the photograph, and no money, people would laugh at me. [Salutations for the whole family.]

[ANTONI]

471 September 25

. . . . DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER: I pen you some words. First I ask about your health and success. And as to my success, I am in good health, and my success is as ever. I work as before. And now, dear father and mother, why is it that you don't answer? I sent to you 20 roubles and you don't answer whether you received them or not. And now, dear father and mother, I write to you that I am no more with uncle, but with strange people, because he wanted me to get up every day at two or half-past two o'clock after midnight and to go with him to work.[2] I am working hard enough myself, and I want to rest during the night; 11 hours is work enough. I have worked with him many times and enough. Then he said he

[1] When the parents of wife or husband live with the young couple it is usually the women who quarrel, and it is the rôle of the men to keep harmony. Note the contrast between this sharp passage and the preceding and following ceremonial ones.

[2] Probably the uncle had a shop of his own and wanted his nephew to help him sometimes.

KONSTANCYA WALERYCH SERIES

Very rapid emancipation of a girl in America is shown in these letters. In less than half a year she is married without asking for her parents' permission. Probably the familial bonds were not particularly strong, and there is an instructive influence of the new environment. The girl comes to her sister's home and finds there the familial attitude very weak, and this example acts more destructively than solitude upon her own familial spirit.

474–76, KONSTANCYA WALERYCH, IN AMERICA, TO HER PARENTS IN POLAND

474 GREENBURG, PA., December 8, 1913

DEAREST PARENTS: To your words, "Praised be Jesus Christus," I answer, "For centuries of centuries. Amen."

Dearest parents, I inform you that I received the letter sent by you from which I got information about your health and success also. As to myself, thanks to God the Highest, I am in good health, which I wish also to you from all my heart. As to my success, it is not very good because I have done housework, and have been paid $10 for this month, but I had too heavy work; I was obliged to work too long. Now, dearest parents, I inform you that I have at present no work and I don't know what will be further.

Dearest parents, you ask to be informed where I have been boarding after coming to America. I was with my sister and now I am with my sister. Dearest parents, don't be angry with me for not sending you anything up to the present, but I inform you that I could not, because when I traveled to America I remained for a week in Antwerp, and when I came to America I had no work for three weeks, and you know well, dearest parents, that I did not come to parents here; in America nothing is to be had without paying.[1]

[1] Allusion to the fact that her sister and brother-in-law take money for board. In the old country they would have given her hospitality at least for some weeks,

country, I cared for him as a father, for his son. I bought him one suit of clothes for my money and gave him another of my own.[1] [End missing.]

[UNCLE OF ANTONI]

473 October 22, 1912

DEAR PARENTS: . . . . What you write me, that I cease to help you, is not true, because I think of you and remember and will not cease to remember you. I would have sent you some roubles long ago, but I had no news about the others, whether you received them or not. Since I have learned that you received them, I send you now 120 roubles, 20 roubles for your expenses, and 100 roubles please lend at interest. And if you have not enough with those 20 roubles, write to me, and I will send you more, but let these 100 roubles remain untouched. [Salutations.]

ANTONI

[1] Probably all the facts related by both of them are true. The uncle has certainly treated his nephew in the traditional way, playing the part of a father, making him work, beating him but also helping him and caring for his future.

And secondly, when I came to America I often wept because I found myself among good people [irony?]. Dearest parents, I inform you that we had a great wedding, only I was so sad that you were not at my wedding and that you did not even know about it, because I did not write to you.

Dearest parents, I, Jan Czarnecki, your son-in-law, bow to you and greet you heartily, and I beg you not to be angry with me for marrying your daughter, because it is God who gives their fortune to men, and to us also He gave such a fortune and we married in conformity with the will of the Highest. Now, dearest parents, we kiss your hands and we bow to your feet and we ask your parental blessing for this our new life. [Usual greetings.]

Your loving children,

JAN and KONSTANCYA CZARNECKI

476 March 25, 1914

. . . . DEAREST PARENTS: . . . . We inform you, dearest parents, that we received the letter you sent us, for which we thank you heartily. We thank you for your good hearts, that you sent us your parental blessing. Dearest mother, you think of having sent me to America as if you had sent me to the grave, and you believe that we shall not be able to return to our country; but about this you can be perfectly sure, mother, because if God gives us health and happiness, we can go to our country at any moment.

Now I, your son-in-law, thank you, dear parents, heartily, that you admitted me to the family circle, and at the same time I thank you that you gave your daughter under my care,[1] and I will endeavor that she may ever be satisfied with me. We inform you, dear parents, that we send you 10 roubles and 2 more, one for grandmother, one to sister Zosia; it makes together 12. We inform you that, thanks to God the Highest, we are in good health, which we wish to you also with our whole heart. We are only sad that you grieve too

[1] A good expression of the complex meaning which marriage assumes when it is still a familial matter but has become also an individual matter. There is no place for the idea of putting the girl under the man's care in the familial system, because she remains in the care of the group as a whole; there is no place for the idea of being admitted into the family circle in the individualistic marriage-organization, because the marriage-group becomes then an independent entity.

Dearest parents, I inform you that I send you meanwhile thirty roubles for Christmas, and by my soul I cannot send you more at present, because I do not work and I need it myself. I have nothing more to write you, only I greet you and send you low salutations, and I wish you a Merry Christmas, and may the Godly Child have you in His care. God grant it. Amen.

Your loving daughter,

KONSTANCYA WALERYCH

Now, dearest parents, I, your daughter, Frankowska, salute you and greet you heartily and I inform you that I was ill and had two boys born, but they were both dead. Now I [son-in-law] greet you and salute you, and all our children bow to you and kiss you.

BRONISŁAW FRANKOWSKI

Dear Zosia [younger sister], I salute you and write to you that you must go to school and learn well, and next year you will come to America, and then you will write letters.

KONSTANCYA WALERYCH

475 January 17, 1914

. . . . DEAR PARENTS: . . . . I inform you that I married a man from Galicia. Our marriage occurred on the 12th of January; my husband is named Jan Czarnecki. Now, dear parents, I beg you heartily, don't be angry with me for marrying so hastily and a man from so far a country and for not even writing to you about it.[1] I inform you, dear parents, that I took a husband from so far a country for this reason, that, as you know, the girls who married with us and took husbands from the same village, were most unhappy afterward.[2]

---

if not months. The American conditions and customs are considered a justification for not fulfilling the duty of hospitality. The main reason of the change is the fact that here food has to be bought instead of being produced, and thus the economic instead of the social point of view is applied to the question of living. Cf. Introduction: "Economic Life."

[1] The only case in our collection where a girl marries without first asking her parents. Of course it is a complete break of tradition (cf. Introduction: "Marriage"), and a conscious one, since she knows and understands the traditional norms.

[2] The justification of the breach of this custom is interesting, because based upon consideration of utility and personal happiness.

FELIKS P. SERIES

The letters afford a good example of a conflict between the solidarity of the old familial type (uncle and nephew) and conjugal solidarity. The conflict is both sentimental and economic. We have, unfortunately, only one side of it presented, but it seems that the familial solidarity is here stronger than the conjugal.

477–80, FROM FELIKS P., IN AMERICA, TO A FRIEND IN POLAND

477 CHICAGO, July 31, 1908

DEAR COMPANION WACŁAW: I have not written to you for so long a time, because I had no reason to boast about my lot. My uncle is very ill, and with his wife, or rather that mad woman. I can do nothing. Work is also difficult to get here. If my uncle were in good health, then at least I could have a job with him, but he must give this business into other hands, because of his illness. I have searched for work 2 days, all in vain. And with my aunt, or mad woman, it is necessary to make order in such a way as if she were not a human being [by beating her]. My uncle had a motorcycle which he bought just before his illness. He lies in the hospital. I called on him for the first time; after some conversation he told me to take the motorcycle and to use it. Do you know what this snake did? She sold it, and she told him that somebody had stolen it. Such [trouble] I have with this woman. Where I live there are no Poles at all; they all live on the other side of the city. I don't know when I shall go to your brother, for my head is totally broken [with trouble]. I can only wait until my uncle recovers; then everything will be in order. If not, I will take the woman by the head, the money in my pocket and run away home. What else can I do here if he dies? . . . . FELIKS P.

478 August 11, 1908

DEAR WACŁAW: . . . . I am without occupation up to the present, but . . . . the brother of my uncle's wife is trying to get me into . . . . the West Pullman shop. . . . . I long much for you,

much, but be calm, because our Lord God gives his fortune to every man, and we married in conformity with God's will.

Now I inform you about my parents. Both my parents are still living and they dwell in Galicia, district Ropczyce, village Czarna, post-station Sędziszów. Father's name is Filip, mother's, Dorota. We are nine brothers—four of us are in America, five in our country—and two sisters.

We have nothing more to write. [Usual greetings.]

Your loving children,

JAN and KONSTANCYA CZARNECKI

WINKOWSKI SERIES

Almost complete disintegration of the whole traditional set of attitudes appears in this series. The cause is certainly the fact that the man finds himself at first almost alone, and then quite alone among Americans, and thus there is lacking the pressure of social opinion, still existing, even if weakened, in American-Polish communities. It cannot, of course, be assumed that there are no egotistic personalities in Poland, but the behavior in this case would be impossible in the native community of the man. However egotistic the individual, the community checks would not permit of this kind and degree of violation of social tradition.

481–88, S. WINKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, TO FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND

481 July 8, 1907

In the first words of my letter I salute you, dear mother, and you, sister. I inform you that I received your letter, and I inform you that by the favor of God I am well, and I wish you the same. Now I inform you about this, that you write me sad letters. Why do you do it? Write me joyful letters. I do not like it if anybody writes such a sad letter.[1] There is the will of the Highest God, and whatever God grants it is well. You write to me if I will send you the money, but I do not say that I will not send it, but I will tell you that I am in far America. There is a post-office but by this post-office it is impossible to send the money to the old country, but it is necessary to go to the agent. And to go to the city will cost 50 dollars. If you need it immediately then borrow somewhere, and after two months

[1] This is not the first time we meet the request not to write sad letters. (Cf. No. 405.) This shows the impression which the letters make upon the reader and the importance ascribed to the mood expressed in them. At the same time we see a conscious endeavor to escape moral pain.

but I hope that we shall yet be here in America together. Here in Chicago, when I looked about, I was not very much pleased with the nature of the place, but as to distraction and society, the occasions are innumerable. Naturally I have not been so merry up to the present. For that it is necessary to shake your pocket out.

FELIKS P.

479 October 10, 1908

DEAR COMPANION: . . . . I have some work, but only a kind from which I can earn a bare living. All this [lack of work] is through the fault of my uncle, for he lives in a place where there is not a bit of a factory, and he wants me to work near him that I may live in his house and be with him until he recovers. But I think of making it short and searching for steady and well-paid work, for with him, i.e., with my uncle, one can live as with a man, but when he is ill he cannot govern [his household] as he did before, but his "cholera" [wife] manages everything. But you understand I treat her shortly [severely]. I intended before this to drive her away to the four winds, but with a woman it is always difficult. He, i.e., my uncle, is ill of a sickness which needs a long cure, and even then it is not certain whether he will recover. So this woman thinks so to herself, that if he is cured after a long time all the money will be spent, for it cost them already $560 for 4 months. And if he dies nevertheless she will have nothing left. So she wants him to die as soon as possible—such a "cholera." And he, i.e., my uncle, has here nobody of his own family except me. So I have cared for him up to the present, but if this lasts longer I must leave them, for I get very nervous through quarreling and this is bad for me. . . . .

FELIKS P.

480 December 16, 1908

DEAR WACŁAW: . . . . I answer you at once, but unhappily the answer is unfavorable, for I have no work. I worked for 5 weeks only, and I could only buy what I needed for the winter. It is true that I don't pay board, but then I have been working for only part of the day. I would not sit here so long, but there is now little hope for my uncle. At any moment we expect his death, and then, evidently, I have a certain job. . . . . Don't be angry with me. As soon as I begin to work I must pay you back at once, for I owe nobody else. . . . .

FELIKS P.

have a butcher-shop [*bucernie*] of my own, then I will get married. I dressed this girl in silk and gold. We meet once a week. When I write to you next time then I will send the money, because now I am in great trouble [*trublu*]. . . . .

STEVE WINKOWSKI

483 December 8, 1909

I inform you, beloved mother, and you, beloved sister Bronisława, that by the favor of God I am well and the same I wish to you. I beg mother and you, sister, to bless me and my Miss Bronisława Dronskowska with whom I shall be married after Christmas [*Krismusie*]. I ask you to my wedding. She is not Polish. Her fathers come from under German [rule]. They have lived in America a long time already. Their grandfather and grand-grandfather [were] in America. They are Catholics just as we, and she greets you also.[1] . . . .

STEVE WINKOWSKI

484 January 5, 1910

I inform beloved mother and father, and you, sister, that by the favor of God I am well and the same I wish to you. I received your letter. I beg your pardon, don't be angry at me for not writing often to you. I will always write to you that I am well. Now I write to you about my success. My success is pretty good. I work always. I have good work. I have worked in the store [*storze*] long years. I am very lonesome, I do not hear the Polish language at all.[2] Here are Poles who have been in America for many years, and therefore they do not care for the Polish language. This girl whom I am going to marry, they say she is Polish but I did not hear Polish language from her.

I greet you fondly and sincerely, mother, father and sister, Aunt Gricanowska and uncle and your children.

STANLY [*sic*] WINKOWSKY

[1] He still asks for a blessing, invites to his wedding, and informs that the girl is Catholic. In so far the tradition persists, but only its form is left, for he would not care at all if his mother forbade the marriage.

[2] Some traces of homesickness remain. His special longing for the Polish language may be connected with the fact that he feels his isolation on account of his poor English.

I will go to the city and then I will send the money, because now I do not have time to go to the city. I am doing carpenter's work, I have 75 dollars a month. There are no Poles here but us two. I have an opportunity to marry, but she is not a Polish girl, and therefore it is likely that I shall not. I intend to go to the old country for a visit, and whoever in the old country wishes me well I will extend my hand to him, and whoever wishes me ill then he will learn who is Stefan [writer's name].[1] I inform you that I have good work. I work only from 8 in the morning to 5 in the evening and afterward we go to learn and to fight and to leap and to weep, as they say in the old country.

I bow to mother and to sister. I ask for a quick reply. Dear mother [find] for me a nice girl in the old country, nice and handsome, whom I greet fondly. I bow to Ososki, to Pawlinow and to all acquaintances. My address . .

STEVE [*sic*] WINKOWSKI

482 IRONWOOD, MICH., September 29, 1908

DEAR MOTHER: I decided to write to you a few words and I greet you with God's words ["Praised be," etc.]. Don't be angry with me for not writing you a letter for such a long time. Because I cannot describe to you my lot where I was. It is likely that if my acquaintances knew it they would never believe it. What a nationality there is in America! If such a man were brought to your village then all the people would run away from fear [alluding to the negroes]. And I am toiling here a second year. I have pretty good work. I work as a butcher.[2] I have a pay day [*peide*] of 75 dollars a month, and I have a further income of 60 dollars, and my brother and Bolesław Kowaleski are working in the iron mine [*mainie*]. I will have a butcher-shop [*bucernie*] of my own.

Now I inform, dear mother, about my great trouble [*trubel*]. I have a great burden upon my heart on account of one girl. I have been acquainted with her for over 10 months. She is very beautiful and [the daughter] of a rich farmer. She is not Polish. When I

[1] A self-assertion resulting from his feeling of his own importance, developed by success. This normal attitude here takes a rough form because of the man's low degree of moral culture. Cf. the case of Adam, in the Raczkowski series.

[2] For "butcher" he uses *bucera* and similarly Polonizes a number of words as indicated in brackets. These words will not be understood at home and are a form of showing-off, harmonizing with his lying about his income.

me health I make 95 dollars a month. I am a boss [*bosza*] in a big store [*storze*]. You write to me whether I am married. Well, no, America is not the old country where it is necessary to marry for your whole life. Here it is not so.[1]

I beg your pardon dear mother and sister and father. In a short time I will come to you for a visit. I will not stay long with you, and I will go back. I will go to you with the daughter of my landlord. She can speak Polish a little.

I ask for a quick reply.

S. A. WINKOWSKI

488 EVELETH, MINN., March 29, 1912

BELOVED MOTHER, SISTER, AND FATHER: I inform you about my health. By the favor of God I am well, and the same I wish to you, and my success is pretty good. Therefore I inform you that the 10th of May I will be gone to another province, very far away. And what mother wrote me about this money which is for me, the lawyer wants 20 dollars from me for getting this money. I think that there is not any more than that.

I do not have anything to write. I remain, with good health.

S. A. WINKOWSKI

[1] Complete repudiation of the traditional idea of marriage—the more striking if compared with his rather normal attitude less than three years before.

485 May 30, 1911

DEAR SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW: I inform you that I am well and the same I wish to you. I greet your children.

Please answer who died and who got married.

Your brother,

S. W.

486 June 19, 1911

DEAR MOTHER, FATHER,[1] AND SISTER: I inform you that by the favor of God I am well and the same I wish to you. My success is very, very good. My address . . . .

S. A. WINKOWSKI

487 Day 10

DEAR MOTHER, SISTER, AND FATHER: I inform you that I received your letter. You write to me that I obtained great wealth after [the death of] my brother, but what is this wealth? I wrote to you that he left 300 dollars, so you may write to Kużeński and even to God himself, then he will tell you that I took 300 dollars. The funeral cost me 200 dollars, the hospital 38 dollars, carriages at the funeral 26, holy mass 16 dollars, the beer for treating 58 dollars, the coffin for him 28, the priest took 35 dollars, the cloth for the deceased 35, lawyer 50 dollars; Kużeński, in whose house he was, took 10 dollars. Now I erected a monument at my expense; it cost me 38 dollars.[2] I sent 75 dollars to the Chieleńskis, because he was her [Mrs. C.'s] real brother. I could not get anything because he was not our brother [only half-brother]. In the court they were saying that if you want to get his wealth then come over here. The journey will not cost you much [irony]. You know how much the trip cost me. Only bring a big bag [to hold the money], because I do not want anybody's money. I have enough of my own. So long as God grants

[1] His mother was probably married a second time; hence the addition of "father."

[2] Judging from the general vulgar ostentation and prevarication of the man we cannot accept this as an accurate enumeration of expenses, but the man evidently did conform to the *form* of the old familial attitude by arranging an elaborate funeral for a member of the family. This is a fundamental expression of the solidarity of the family and a sign of its social standing, and Winkowski does it, although his family feelings are almost dead.

possible. And now I inform you that I am in good health, thanks to God, and I wish you the same. And now I admonish you, as my brother, about what you wrote to me—that you will go voluntarily where you may be shot or hung. Remember rather the mercy of Jesus Christ and when this idea [of suicide] visits you, sigh to our Lord God, and it will be better for you.[1] The same ill luck presses heavily upon me also; I suffer poverty and hard words, and I don't know what will become of me, whether I shall ever see you again.

As to the matter which I mentioned to you, about my business, let the clear lightning strike her before she becomes my wife. It would be better for me to break hand and leg than to marry her. I write you so, dear brother, and you can believe me, it will be so. I have other matters in my head than such a crooked stick. And now, dear brother, you write me that paternal and maternal uncles, father and mother, brothers and sisters repudiate me. I don't mind myself; you can repudiate me, because I am an exile and a pilgrim, far away from you, from my father's land and my family, and therefore you repudiate me. Let God repay you all this, good for evil; let it be my wrong and not yours. I beg you, dear brother, salute in my name my parents and thank them that they deigned to repudiate me; but my conscience does not allow me to do it [repudiate them], and God would punish me heavily for it. I beg you for the second time, write a letter to our parents in your own hand in my name, and thank them for everything.[2] I won't forget you, only be patient, I beg you. And now I inform you that I shall send you for Christmas about 20 roubles and to Stasiulek I shall send also for Christmas 10 roubles and that will be all. And now pardon me, dear brother, for writing so poorly, but I have on this account [the bad news] drowned the worm pretty well, for I received your letter precisely on pay day, and I am writing this letter to you at 1½ o'clock in the night.[3] And I bid you

[1] The inclination to suicide is very frequently expressed by the peasant in moments of discouragement, and the only reason preventing suicide from being particularly frequent is the religious fear of damnation, since the fear of death itself, as we have seen, is not very strong.

[2] The meekness manifested is not ironical, and is intended to provoke a reaction of compassion and remorse.

[3] The feeling of grief is compared to the gnawing of a worm, and "drowning the worm" is the usual popular expression for drinking in order to forget grief. Socially there is only one form of normal intoxication, that which takes place during ceremonies of any kind, where the purpose of drinking is to maintain a certain intensity of common feelings. But individually drinking has another function,

INDIVIDUAL LETTERS AND FRAGMENTS OF LETTERS SHOWING THE DISSOLUTION OF FAMILIAL SOLIDARITY

The dissolution of familial solidarity is not always due exclusively to the member who has emigrated; it may also happen that the group ceases after a time to be interested in its absent member. Or it may happen that the group learns of some real or imaginary break of solidarity on the part of the absent member and repudiates him. In this respect we should remember that sometimes the act of emigration, and always a too prolonged stay abroad, constitute in themselves a break of solidarity. Often the reaction of the group (or of some of its members) is aroused by a false report about the absent member sent by someone from abroad. Gossip, which often forces the individual to remain a solidary member of the group, may become a factor of dissolution when it is false. Finally, it happens also that the emigration of a member of the family-group leads to a breakdown of familial attitudes in another member who stays at home, and whose situation, in consequence of the emigration of the first, becomes abnormal. Thus, for example, a wife left alone by her husband, a child left without the control of the father, become more easily demoralized.

Cases of these various kinds are given in the following.

489–98, ISOLATED LETTERS OR FRAGMENTS OF LETTERS

489

[The group repudiates the member, but the latter has not lost his feeling of solidarity.]

DETROIT, MICH., October 10, 1900

DEAR BROTHER: "Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

I inform you, dear brother, that I received your letter for which I thank you from my soul and my heart. May God help you the best

this ship-ticket to [sister] Kostka. Let Kostka come with this ticket. She has only to give the name and the age of my wife. Let her come with the children, and when Kostusia [Kostka] comes we will do well together, and my wife, as she was a public woman, so may she remain a public woman. And if the children fear to go, please, father, take them to your home; I will send you 200 roubles. Let her not make a fool of me in America, as if I were her servant; this is neither right nor necessary. When someone read me that letter of hers, finally I did not let him finish, because I was ashamed.

If nobody comes with this ticket, I will get the money back and will send it directly to you, father, for the children. And if not, let Kostusia come alone if the children don't want to come.

[B. Leszczyc]

491

[Example of the influence of gossip upon the attitude of the family-group toward the absent member.]

Natrona, Pa., December 29

. . . . Dear Parents: You write that I forget about you. My dearest, my parents, forgive me, but I cannot write myself, and when you ask somebody to write you must go and treat him. My dear parents, it was very painful for me when I learned—as Frek told me—that I am reveling so in America, that I throw ten roubles away at a baptism. And I did not spend even ten grosz, because I had nothing to spend. I had still a debt, and they [my creditors] looked angrily at me; how could I spend anything? My dearest, my parents, I have had very sad holidays, even in the army I had no such sad holidays, and the first holidays that I had in America were not so sad as now. I don't know whether something happened in our country, that I have been so sad. Now I have nothing more to write, only I send you hearty wishes, my dearest, and I kiss the hands and feet of my dearest parents.

[Józek]

And now I, Helena, write to auntie. Please, auntie, don't believe anybody, who says that Józek is such a reveler. He did not throw away a single grosz.

Greetings from myself, and also from my man and children.

farewell, dear [brother]. Remain with the Lord God. And I beg you, write letters to auntie and to our parents from yourself, for I will not write unless I receive an answer, because for 2 months already I have had no letter. Goodbye. I remain,

Your loving brother,

A. Rembiński

My address is such, the following one. . . . . Finis. *Gut naj* [good night].

And I beg you answer the soonest possible and write, my brother, news from [illegible name] and the neighborhood.[1]

A. Remb.

490

[Demoralization of a wife in the absence of her husband. The latter, in spite of his emigration, shows more familial feeling, even with regard to the children, than the wife. The letter tends to establish a solidary relation between the husband and the rest of the family as against the wife.]

Letter written the 13th

"Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

And now, dear father, what does all this mean that you write me? Why does my wife not wish to come to America, and writes me such stupid things that I am [illegible word] with her? I have sent her a ship-ticket for all, and she writes me such silly things and is not ashamed of it. When I sent the ticket I sent for all, and not for her alone. Could I leave the children? My heart does not allow me to leave my own children. Then, dear father, if she does not wish to listen it will end badly for her. Dear father, bow to her [ironically] and take the children to yourself, and I will send you directly two hundred roubles for the children, and let her do as she pleases. And if not, then give

---

it becomes a substitute for action whenever a strong feeling is aroused and for some reason cannot find an immediate expression in activity. For the eminently practical nature of the peasant a feeling which does not lead to action becomes unbearable, and he is not accustomed to find relief in aesthetic life or in a more or less long process of theoretic reflection which precedes or substitutes itself for action in intellectual people.

[1] The character of his writing shows that he is becoming more and more intoxicated. He adds some meaningless and corrupted English and German words about "writing letters."

494

[Fragment of a letter showing how familial solidarity is stronger than gossip.]

DEAR WIFE: Probably you have received the ship-ticket already; so you can prepare to leave. You know that people have told me bad things about your behavior, but to me it seems otherwise. I will forgive you all your wrongdoing. I only hope our life together may be good in the future. The bed-furnishings, whatever you have, bring with you, because here they are very expensive. And bring also your better dresses with you; the remainder can be left for the present. Put it into a trunk and let it lie there for some time. Conceal also my army-certificate. I will not send you money; manage as you can until you come to me. The agent said you will have no trouble about anything. Take with you a loaf of black bread—it is the best—and also some apples. I wrote you already how you may explain.

495

[Fragment of a letter showing some coldness between husband and wife as the result of emigration.]

June 16

DEAR WIFE: Why do you make such bad allusions to me? Do you know from what family I come? Did you not know whom you took? I have not worked for 7 months, and now times are so bad that in America it gets worse and worse. A lot of people come from our country, and here in America there is no work for them, and thousands walk about without work. But the people in our country imagine that when somebody comes to America he does nothing but make money. But here in America one must work for 3 horses, and yet this work is scarce. With this letter I send you some few złoty [a little money]. I send thirty roubles which you will have for your expenses. About the holiday of God's Mother [patron] of seed-time I will send you perhaps a ship-ticket and then you will come to me. As soon as you receive this letter and the money write me how many geese and young cattle and pigs you have already. Why is it so hard to persuade you to write letters? Is it so hard for you to write?

492

[Fragment of a letter showing the influence of gossip. Author unknown.]

I wrote you 2 letters, and you did not answer me. And now you write me to send you money, so I can send you a few roubles. One woman will go to our country, so you will receive a gift in a month. You ask me whether I will come home. Well, dear wife, we shall meet soon. Put out of your head [the idea] that I have a mistress here; I did not know that you are still so stupid. When I was in America the first time, I was younger, and did not commit this folly; should I commit it now? I should sooner have expected death than to hear this. Inform me who told you about it.

493

[Fragment of a letter showing the influence of gossip and the demoralization of children in the absence of the father.]

June 4, 1914

Dear Wife: I inform you that I am in good health, that I left my old place, because there was no work. I came then to Toledo and I have work. I sent you 20 roubles on June 2, because I had no more. You know that in the world it is indispensable to have some money with you. If God helps me, I will send you more. Here in America it begins now to be so that one does not work more than he works. Thousands of people go about without work. And as to our children, I cannot hear any more about it. Give them some of the broomstick and chase them away on the street, because they are so bad. And you I ask, don't write such letters to me any more, because otherwise I will stop writing to you at all.[1] Tell the man who told you all this that I will send him some roubles for beer in reward for it. Let him get drunk [again].

[1] Probably this expression of provocation has some history, and this is not the first complaint of the wife about the children, but we find frequent protests of this kind from peasants, about the communication of disagreeable facts. They say they do not want to be made sad. (Cf. No. 481.) Reflection is painful to the peasant, especially when he has no possibility of action, and by a sort of passive hedonistic selection he demands to be spared disagreeable news. Or he may resort to positive hedonistic selection, e.g., drink. Cf. No. 489, note 3.

send my letter. And I inform you, dear wife, that I will soon be in our country. And now I beg you, don't grieve, you, my wife, and you, my daughter Zosia. I don't mention daughter Domicella, because she is not worth it.

I, your loving husband,

FRANCISZEK OŁÓW

I remain in good health, but in sorrow. That is a madness of one's reason! To fall off from God and to take hold of a man!

498 WILMINGTON, DEL., November 3, 1909

To that sad letter I answer: "In centuries of centuries. Amen."

DEAR SISTER [COUSIN]: Forgive me for not having written for so long a time, but you know that I wished to gather some roubles in order to send them back sooner. Now I will send the money very soon. And now, dear sister, I inform you and your husband that I am in good health, and I wish the same to you, dear [sister and] brother-in-law, and to your children. Now I request you, dear sister, and you, dear brother-in-law, inform me what is the news in my home, because I received a letter which grieved me much, that my daughter Domicella will get married, but forsakes her faith; and my wife writes me that she will not be at home, so I don't know, where she is to be. Dear sister and dear brother-in-law, Antoni, I beg you, tell me how this thing is, because I have nobody else to ask except you, dear sister. So I beg you heartily, inform me what has become of my wife and my dear daughter Zosia, because I no longer ask about my daughter Domicella. Since she forsakes God and her parents I cannot even ask about her. I am a wanderer in a strange land for the sake of my children, and hear through a letter that my daughter forsakes her faith and her parents. I wanted to go, but I have money only for my debt, and I must still earn for my journey. If God grants me work and health I will be soon in our country. I have nothing more to write. [Usual ending.]

FRANCISZEK OŁÓW

496 June 7, 1914

[Fragment showing the introduction of an outsider into family quarrels.]

I inform you, Sir, about my health. I am in good health, Mr. M., and I wish you the same. This Smoliniak went away with another man to New Britain, and they wrote about us that we robbed them and their sisters. So if you ever write [to them], as a man knowing our situation, be so kind and abuse them. And please write them the truth, what profit we had of them. When he was ill with his hand, I had his stove heated for 3 weeks, and during the whole time when he did not work he did not pay his [full] board but only $2 for his food. Mańka [his sister], as you know, remained [with him] for days and even weeks, and we asked nothing for it, only what we lent her. As to their education, you know the best about it. The big Sobieski stopped me in the street and asked me whether he was my cousin, and said that probably he was educated among cattle. Please tell him some day or other about it.

497

[The writer of the two following letters is the man referred to in the Raczkowski series, in connection with a quarrel with Adam Raczkowski. He came to America at a mature age and emigration produced hardly any change in his attitudes. The present letters are interesting because of the familial situation. Marriage with a Russian is, of course, forbidden by the community on account of both national and of religious considerations, and the family shares the standpoint of the community. In disowning the daughter, Ołów conforms to the expectation of the community and, as head of the family, orders his wife to do the same. It is true that in writing to his cousins, the Wolskis, he is asking for information, but he wants them, as family-members, to know of the situation, and he expects them to share his position, and invites their intrusion.]

[November, 1909]

My dear Wife: I received a letter from you which grieved me very much. But I beg you, don't grieve, because this grieving will not help us. If our daughter forsakes you, dear wife, as a good mother, and her father, who wanders about the world for her happiness, and if she despises all this, then nothing can be done. And when she comes from her wedding, from the Russian church, let her immediately go away just as she stands. And you, dear wife, I beg you, live where you are living, because I do not even know where to

were not merely children of the given couple, but in a sense belonged to the family as a whole, and the parents, particularly the father, represented the total group with regard to them, and was to some extent responsible for them before the group. Hence the relation between parents and children was one of authority and obedience, and bore at the same time a certain impersonal character, precisely because it lacked exclusiveness, for the children as members of the larger group had a quality which put them partly outside of the smaller group. The isolation of the latter brought new forms of interior life; the parents' authority and the children's obedience became personal, not social, attitudes, and the individualization called for a new norm—that of reciprocal personal affection.

The Polish peasant is now on the way from the older form of familial life to the new one, and we find in the present volume the two forms mixed in various proportions. But since in the new form individual factors play a much more important part than in the old one, the strength and harmony of familial life begin to depend in a much larger measure upon such factors as character, intellectual development, sentimental refinement, etc. Thus we find examples of a stronger or weaker connection between the members of the new marriage-group, of a more or less perfect harmony in the life of this group, of its more or less solidary behavior with regard to the external world, etc.

In arranging the materials we place first those in which the marriage-group is shown as being merely a part of the family, and later those in which the "natural family" is definitely constituted.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES

In this connection we find a great variety of problems, but the common problem in all the series of letters is that of the constitution of what may be termed a "natural" family, i.e., a family based, not upon social traditional attitudes, but only upon the actual relations between its members, and therefore practically limited to a married couple with their children; it is the family as elementary social group of the classical sociological theory. It proves here to be the result of a relatively late social evolution. As the older form of familial unity, in which the family embraced relatives up to the fourth or fifth degree (without very clearly determined limits), decomposes under the influence of new conditions, its parts enter into the composition of different territorial, professional, sometimes national and religious groups, and thus their former connection is loosened. Simultaneously an evolution goes on within each of these parts—each elementary group of married couple+children; the reciprocal relations of its members undergo a change. This may perhaps be best expressed in the following way: As long as the familial group was constituted by all the relatives on the sides of both husband and wife, the fundamental conjugal norm was that of "respect," because the married pair was not an isolated couple related only as individuals, but in them and through them their respective families were united, and the dignity of these families was involved in the conjugal relation. When this large family is dissociated, the fundamental conjugal norm becomes that of love and reciprocal confidence, because the relation is a purely personal one. In the larger family the children

Władzio is already beginning to walk. Anielcia had a good school-certificate and will go to the second class. Franek was at his first confession and communion and will go to the third class. Now you ask how much rye I have harvested. Well, I have harvested 5 kopa [1 kopa = 60 pieces, here sheaves] and 19 sheaves, and of barley 2 kopa and 12 sheaves. I put it into the barn of Ignacy Pasek and I paid him 5 crowns, and the driving cost me 3 gulden, I drove 5 times [carts] of dung. The vegetables cost me 3 renski [gulden]. After the harvest I drove dung again [into the field] 5 times, and it cost 2 renski and 1 szóstka. For the fine I paid 3 renski.[1] The cow gives little milk, because I have no good pasture. I received money from you. Now I inform you that Kustra plagues me much about money [debt]. I should like to buy rye and wheat for sowing. I have spent 15 renski from this money. I have sold that pig. God keep us from such pigs! I took 9 renski for it. You are angry with me for not having answered you. But how could I answer since I received no letter? The money came 3 weeks before the letter, and I was very anxious. Write me whether I should pay for my letters [stamp them] or not . . . . and write me where you are boarding. . . . .

Now I kiss you, most beloved husband.

Your wife,

JÓZEFA PAWLAK

500 September 22, 1912

. . . . Now, dear husband, I inform you that I received the money, 102 and 5 crowns. I gave the 5 crowns to mother, as you intended, and the 100, with interest, I paid back to Pieta, for Kustra refused to accept them. She wants all the debt at once. Now, dear husband, you ask me for what fine I paid 3 renski. Well, for what was imposed upon us when the cattle were sick, for you had lost that paper which we received from the *starosta* [chief of district] and I had no proof. I had to pay because they wanted to inscribe [levy on] my cow. Dear husband, I inform you that Magdusia [the husband's sister] intends to go to America. Will you allow me to sell

[1] This paragraph shows the extreme complexity of the peasant's counting—the result of a combination of old Polish units with those imposed by the foreign government. In this particular case a new source of complication is the substitution of crowns for gulden, introduced in Austria in the past century. The old units are kept by the peasants.

The conjugal relation is here very impersonal. There are only a few rather insignificant expressions of affection; business, news about children and relatives constitute the content of the letters. The detailed account which the wife gives of all expenses and other matters of business is significant. In these matters she takes only provisionally the place of her husband as manager of the property which is the basis of the living of the family, and in this respect her position is settled; nothing can be changed. In striking contrast with this behavior stands the fact that she has evidently bought a house, in her own name, with money sent her by the husband. Here a traditional attitude has not yet been sufficiently established with regard to the new property and the money for which it was bought, for the money was earned in a new way—by emigration. Of course the simplest conclusion would be that the rôle of the woman should remain the same, because the new problem is an economic problem like the old ones. But we know that the peasant sees qualitative differences where the economist finds mere quantities, and these qualitative differences in the present case are great enough to lead to a new attitude.

499–505, JÓZEFA PAWLAK, IN POLAND, TO HER HUSBAND, IN AMERICA

499 BUDZIWOJ, August 15, 1912

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter, from which I learned about your dear health and success. We are all in good health. The children long awfully for you. When you went away I could not calm them; they cried so that they almost became sick. Józuś asks always where is father and whether he won't come.

nice; we have also beautiful rye and wheat and barley and clover. Now I inform you that the cow stands in the stable, for they don't let her go upon the manorial pasture and I don't know what will be, how I shall keep her until the harvest, for I have nowhere to pasture her.[1] Moreover I have got a calf, and now it is impossible to get even a handful of grass from the manorial land, for they guard it day and night. . . . .[2]

JÓZEFA PAWLAK

503 November 23, 1913

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . I have already bought that house. I agreed at 530 and I gave them 400. The contract is settled. I paid 13 renski, and 30 cents for the stamps, and I must still give 130 renski. So send them to me. You ordered me to borrow 200 renski from mother, but she did not give them to me, for she had none. She had lent to Kondratka, for you did not mention anything in your letter to her and she did not know. [Enumerates house expenses.] You ordered me to borrow a machine for straw-chopping, but I did not take it for I have no money. . . . . The pig keeps well enough, but I won't drive it [to the fair] until St. Paul's Day [June 29]. The cow and calf keep well also. Pasek will sell two morgs [of land] quite near this house which we bought. If we could buy at least half a morg, then even if a hen ran about there she would be upon our own land. Pitera is very angry with me for having bought this house and threatens me very much. . . . .[3]

JÓZEFA PAWLAK

[1] The permission to send cattle to the manorial pasture, when not a right of common, is sometimes granted personally by the manor-owner as a reward for some service or as help. Sometimes the arrangement is tacit, but after some time the fact becomes custom and is claimed as a right. A change of manor-owners or officials often leads to serious troubles.

[2] Cutting of manorial grass for the cow, carrying of dry wood from the manorial forests, gathering of mushrooms, berries, nuts, is not considered as in any case reprehensible. But little reprehension is attached to such acts as *cutting* of wood, stealing fruit or vegetables, letting the cattle damage the crops, etc., wherever the damage is done to a manor-owner, not to a neighbor-peasant. Cf. Introduction: "Economic Life."

[3] The peasants in Galicia are more attached to land and more unwilling to move from the country to the towns than in any other part of Poland. Perhaps the slight development of industry is one of the causes. Owing to emigration there is relatively more ready money than purchasable land. So the price of land is enormous, and the rivalry between buyers assumes the extravagant forms exemplified in this letter.

the cow? For she is so bold that I cannot manage her. She runs away whenever she wants to and goes wherever she will, and does damage to other people, and I must pay. I would sell her and buy some older one; perhaps she would be gentler. Now, I have not yet sown the rye, for it has rained during the whole month and nothing could be done. I have nothing more to write, only I greet you kindly and heartily innumerable times. May I see you soon again! Franuś, Anielcia, Józio, and Władzio kiss the hands of their dear father. . . . .

JÓZEFA PAWLAK

501 January 6 [1913]

. . . . Now, dear husband, I received 250 crowns from you on January 2, for which I thank you heartily. I gave back to the Kustras the sum with interest. They took 12 renski of interest. I have threshed the grain; Wojciech Kret threshed for me. I got 4½ korce [18 bushels] of rye and 4 of barley. The threshing cost me 7 renski and 20 cents [kreuzer]. I have ground in the mill 2 korce of rye and ¾ of barley. For threshed barley I gave mother those 5 crowns which you ordered, and I invited her for Christmas eve, but she did not come; she would have come, but Magdusia did not wish it. . . . . I have bad times now for I have no firewood. I have burned all, and it is far to the forest, difficult to drive, and I have little money left. . . . .

[JÓZEFA]

502 May 18, 1913

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter and 175 renski. I gave mother 5 crowns, and 22½ renski [45 crowns] were left for me. I have spent it all, for I bought dung at 60 cents; I could get it cheaper nowhere. . . . . I had 10 wagons of my own and I bought 10. . . . . Now, dear husband, I wrote you for advice, what to do with this house which is for sale, and you answered me neither so nor otherwise. Now people give [offer] for it 530 renski. It seems to me too expensive, but if you order, dear husband, I shall buy it for this money, because it would be good for us. But if you don't order, I won't buy. But there are people who will buy it, for there are buyers enough. Now, dear husband, upon my land I planted potatoes and I left one bed for cabbage. I gave one bed to mother, and I rented two from Lasota and Pasek. As to the crops, they are very

KUKIEŁKA SERIES

The familial character of marriage viewed from the husband's side is depicted in the letters of this series. It is difficult to establish whether in this case the relation is really closer than in that of the Pawlaks. At any rate the letters show much more eagerness to keep the familial solidarity and manifest greater claims on familial affection than those of Pawlak's wife, and it seems that Kukiełka's wife is also less interested in the questions of familial solidarity than her husband. If we compare these facts with the situations found in other series (for example, the Markiewicz series), where the wife evidently does not share her husband's familial attitude, and with other cases where the wife seems rather passive and the husband even writes all the familial letters (Stelmach, Cugowski), a general conclusion seems to present itself: As it is primarily the man, not the woman, who represents and understands the group standpoint, in marriage-groups based upon the familial organization the conjugal affection is maintained much more through the husband than the wife. The attitude of the latter is always personal, and she is never satisfied with being treated by her husband merely as a member of the group with certain functions to perform, and not as an individual. Therefore, after a shorter or longer time, she turns her affection toward her children and becomes often almost indifferent toward her husband, because in the case of the children her individualistic affection finds an easier response. This enables her afterward to assume the rôle of a mediator between her husband and her children when the latter develop an individualistic attitude. (Cf. Osiński series.) Meanwhile the husband shows the same unchanging kind and degree

504 March 1, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: In the first words of my letter I speak to you, dearest husband, with these words: "Praised be Jesus Christus and the Holiest Virgin Mary, glorious through the whole world." May She be with you, dearest husband.

[Generalities about health and success.] I received 320 crowns, from which I gave 20 crowns to mother and 260 crowns I must give to Pasek for this land and house which we bought; 40 crowns will be left for me. I bought 1 korzec of rye for 20 crowns, and I had to give 12 crowns, 20 heller on account of that land which we had bought before from Dala. The notary with whom we made the contract is dead, and they did somewhere some cheating. The successors have now divided the land and for the expense of this division I had to give these 12 crowns. Now you ask in whose name I made this contract about this house. Well, I have written you so many letters asking you whether I should buy it or not, why did you not write me in whose name to do it? [Farming details.] Now, dear husband, you write me to move into this house. But I won't move until you come, for I am afraid lest somebody should do me some harm, for it is near the road. I admitted as lodger Józef Pieskiewicz, the tailor. He will pay me 40 crowns a year. I shall pluck the fruit from the orchard, and he can plant potatoes for himself in the beds which are there. . . . .

JÓZEFA PAWLAK

505 April 17, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . You write me that your leg bites [aches] you. Well, I cannot help you, for if you were at home we would find some help for it. Only I advise you that there are doctors, so don't grudge money but go to a doctor; perhaps he will help you. And don't put on leeches lest something bad should happen with your leg. [Farm-work, crops, etc.]

Our children learn well, they don't ever omit the classes. . . . . Józuś will go to church in the summer when it is warm, for if I took him in winter he would catch cold. Władzio cannot yet cross himself, but tries already to do it. [Farm-work; marriages and deaths.]

JÓZEFA PAWLAK

going very badly, and in this way, that he does not keep his work, and is without a cent at all, and if anybody says anything to him, he does not listen at all, but is ready to fight. What can be done with such a boy? You can understand, dearest little wife, that it would be quite unsuitable for me to give him money, because you know yourself that I must think of you all, and it would be too much if I had still to have difficulties with him or to be concerned with his difficulties. When I sometimes predicted to him [the bad consequences of his behavior] he took pains not to meet me at all. What more can I do? I inform you however that he is in good health; that is all that I can tell you, dearest little wife.[1] I inform you also, dearest little wife, that I will send you about 100 roubles after some days. So don't answer this letter, because after some days another will come, and then you will answer both. Now I want to say this also, my dear little wife, that I am very much pleased with your doing good farming for me, and keeping the boars, sows, and pigs, and with your having harvested the crops. I am very much pleased with this letter, dearest little wife.[2] Now I inform you about my work. I work in a

---

tainly goes back to the time when the work away from the familial farm was mainly servage work; but this is hardly sufficient by itself to explain the facts. We must take into consideration the distinction, pointed out elsewhere, between farm-income and income from hired labor, the latter being additional and destined primarily to cover such expenses as in the peasant's economy are relatively new, while the farm-income is the essential basis of living of the whole family. All these facts are explained if we remember that economic organization is determined by familial organization. The essentially familial property is the hereditary farm, and against this the money earned outside represents the more individual form of property. Wages, being a relatively recent phenomenon, cannot be as completely subordinated to the familial standpoint as land and land-income, even if their subordination is manifested by the demand that earned money be turned over to the family. Therefore, hired work is felt as particularly unsuitable for those whose connection with the main familial group is particularly close, while a certain relaxation of the inhibition is natural for the members who will sooner or later establish a new branch of the family.

[1] Particularly rapid emancipation of the boy. The father's authority is not sufficient when not supported by the whole family-group and community.

[2] The farm-work done by the wife is presented here as meritorious and as if it were done for the husband and deserved his particular gratitude. This attitude seems contrary to the familial principle, according to which there is no division of property between husband and wife because there is no private property. Kukiełka is also evidently conservative and it is improbable that he would occupy an individualistic standpoint. The explanation is connected with the situation

of attachment as prescribed by the organization of the family. Of course the sexual factor must exert a powerful if unconscious influence upon the conjugal relation, but it is not consciously allowed to interfere with the social and moral side of this relation.

The respective rôles of husband and wife change, as we shall see, as soon as marriage becomes an individual matter.

There is no contradiction between the lack of familial solidarity in the married woman and the solidarity which an unmarried girl shows toward her parents, brothers, sisters, and relatives. The unmarried girl has no particular familial function to perform and hence her personal affection to individual members of the family can still easily fit into the familial organization.

506–9, JAN KUKIEŁKA, IN AMERICA, TO HIS WIFE, IN POLAND

506 August 9, 1911

[A page and a half of the usual greetings, wishes, and generalities about health.] Now I inform you, dearest little wife, about what you ask, whether Mańka shall go to Warsaw, although she is the daughter of a farmer. Well, I answer you that she is not to go, because I do not allow this.[1] Now, as to our son Antoni, with him it's

[1] Going to Warsaw means going to serve as a housemaid. The father forbids it as contrary to the peculiar dignity of a farmer as against a landless peasant. We find the same aversion to any hired work for wives. This aversion is weakened, without disappearing, when the child or the wife has to go, not to a Polish estate or city, but abroad—to Germany or to America. Sending children to hired work in the country is not suitable for a farmer who has some 10 morgs of land, while only rich farmers, owning 20 to 30 morgs, consider it below their dignity to send their children to Germany. Evidently the reason of this difference is that the work abroad has some characters of novelty which make the application of traditional inhibitions to it less natural and immediate. Further, the inhibition is not so strong with regard to boys as to girls, not so strong with regard to girls as to wives, and in the process of industrial evolution the first has almost disappeared. But it seems still to be instinctively held with regard to the oldest son or, more exactly, to the son who is to take his father's farm. It is certainly neither by mere sentiment nor by rational calculation that the son who is destined to take the farm is more unwillingly allowed to go to hired work than other sons. The aversion to hired work cer-

greet my dear sisters Katarzyna, Rozalia, Maryanna, with their husbands and children. And now I greet the whole household of father-in-law, father and mother and brothers-in-law. And now, dear wife, I inform you [send you this] through the Mrozys [who are returning], and I send you 4 roubles for your expenses. Buy for yourself, Rózia, a white waist and for Nastusia and Jagusia shawls that you may have them for summer when I come home. And now dear wife, tell my sister Rozalia Figlisz not to allow her daughter Marysia to marry Bzdziuch, because no good will come of it. As the father, so is the son, as the tree, so is the wedge. And then it is a near family, and therefore God will not bless such a marriage, because there are enough people in the world.[1] If she does not believe my words let her be persuaded by the example of those who married their relatives. As a good brother, I admonish Sister Rozalia, let her not do it, what she intends to do. [More greetings for the whole family.]

Your husband,

JAN KUKIEŁKA

Gut bai [goodbye]. It means *do widzenia*. [More wishes of divine blessing for the whole family.] I will ask you only, don't ever quarrel with sister Maryanna, don't abuse her, don't let the children laugh at her, God forbid you this! But on the contrary, as a good mother, you ought more than once to buy either bread or sugar or [illegible word] and to give them to herself and her children, and God will be satisfied with your life and will bless you.[2] [More greetings.]

509 February 15 [1914]

Letter from husband Jan to his wife Rozalia. In the first words of my letter I speak to you, dear wife, with those words that are pleasant to you: "Praised be Jesus Christus" and I hope that you will answer me, "For centuries of centuries. Amen."

And now I inform you, dear wife, that I received your letter on February 13, for which may God reward you, that you wrote me about your dear health and success.[3] And now I inform you, dear

[1] God does not need an increase in population badly enough to bless with children a marriage of this kind.

[2] The whole letter is a notable expression of familial solidarity.

[3] The beginning is particularly formal, preparatory to the scolding which is to follow. His masculine vanity is particularly offended by the lack of respect shown in connection with the photograph, especially as the wife of the other man behaved better in this respect.

brick-factory and earn very good money, that is, $2.70 for 13 hours. The work is very heavy, but I don't mind it; let it be heavy, but may it last without interruption. The brick-factories are going all right during the summer but in winter they stop, and I am afraid of it. But let it be as our Lord God sends it. When that day comes, some way will be found. Now I have nothing more to write, only I may add that in America there have been enormous fevers, for some days thousands. . . . [End of the letter missing.]

[JAN KUKIEŁKA]

507 January 6, 1912

[Two pages of greetings, wishes, reproaches, and justifications about writing or not writing letters.] Now, dearest little wife, as to what you write about sending a ship-ticket for [our daughter] Mańka, it is so: As to the ship-ticket, it does not matter much, but I mind most this: If I take Mańka, what will you do there, dearest little wife? You know yourself that she is of great help to you. That is one thing. And secondly I mind that the girl will be very sad and will suffer misery. Here in America it is not the same as in our country. What if she does come to me? She cannot remain with me, but must go into service, and in the service it is necessary to learn the English language, and even to learn washing and cooking. Then there will be misery and weeping, because somebody speaks and you can only look at him. If you want it exceedingly I will send [the ticket], but then don't blame me. Now I inform you also, dearest little wife, that after this letter I will send you some roubles, so wait some days before you answer.

The loving father of our children,[1]

[JAN KUKIEŁKA]

508 December 30, 1913

. . . . And now, dear wife and daughters, write to me, when do you think it best for me to return home? On Easter or at some other time? And now I greet you, dear wife and daughters, and I

---

outlined in the first note on this letter. The husband's emigration and the hired work he is doing, even if necessitated by the situation, are still formally a departure from his familial duty, which would oblige him to remain on the farm. The wife by doing his work performs his duty and is therefore entitled to gratitude. Their arrangement is personal even if its object—farm-work—is familial.

[1] Curious expression of the familial attitude.

JANKOSKI SERIES

A typical conjugal relation upon the familial basis is shown in this series. The wife is a substitute for the husband, performing economic functions; there is a lack of personal interests; the husband's father and wife's sister are in solidary co-operation with the marriage-group.

510–11, FROM SZYMON JANKOSKI, IN AMERICA, TO HIS WIFE, IN POLAND

510 PERTH AMBOY, N.J., August 11, 1913

[Usual greetings and wishes.] And now, dear wife, I inform you about my success, that my success is good enough because I have work and I work every day. Dear wife, if you find an opportunity to buy [a farm] somewhere for about 700 roubles, then buy it, I request you, dear wife and dear father, for the money that is in the bank there, and if some more is needed, write to me. Dear wife and dear father, if you have the opportunity to buy somewhere near a manor, then buy it, either in Chojnowo or in Obrębiec or in Czernice, because it is always better to buy near a manor than somewhere far away, as there is the possibility of earning something. And now, dear wife and dear father, what you write about money, that I might send you, so deprive yourselves of it for some time yet, dear wife and dear father, because now I shall send you none, as it is not worth sending some cents. I have money but I am not willing to send these few cents. I will send you later and more at once, then you will know that you have received [something] and I shall know that I have sent the money. And so I will send you later, but then about 200 roubles. Now, dear wife, I request you to go to Obrębiec, to call on the Adamskis and to ask them the address of their son, and send me this address to America. Now I have nothing more to write but to greet you, dear wife, lovingly and heartily. I greet Stasiek and Antoś, and I greet dear father. [Greetings from some friends.]

[SZYMON JANKOSKI]

wife, that that letter did not please me at all, because I asked you to write me when I should come, and you did not answer me, as if you were not my own wife but a cook or some other hired woman And now I inform you, that you wrote twice for me to send you my photograph, you gave me no peace. To tell the truth, I did not even wish it, but when you wrote once and then once more, I was obliged to send you the photograph. But it was expensive for me alone, so I asked my companion, and this cost us cheaper. My companion sent one at once to our country, and they answered him and thanked him very much, but when I sent it I did not even get an answer. Such is the gratitude I got. I had thought that I left a good wife at home, but I was disappointed; the husband is far away. I wrote letters as to a wife, but I did not receive any good answers for them. When I was a little boy with my parents I was glad and happy, I had whatever I wished, and now I have a wife who does not even write to me about my daughters. Such is the reward for one's goodness.

And now, dear wife, you write me that Józef, your brother, writes about those few roubles, asking for them. So I write you, dear wife, you may write to him that I will send him those few roubles, but only when I am at home. Now I will not send money home because I need it for my journey, and what is left I will give back. And now you write, that you have no milk. Do you think that I have it? You have rye for bread, 10 korcy, and I must buy bread; you have a house, and I must pay rent, 7 roubles a month, and so my work goes on. And now, dear wife, you write that you have a fat pig [ready] to be killed, so I advise you, if they pay you well, you can sell him, if pigs are dear; but if they are cheap, don't sell. [End missing.]

[Jan Kukiełka]

The general background of the conjugal relation is here still familial; common interests (children, management of the property) are still the main link between husband and wife, and other members of the family (grandfather, uncle) are still closely connected with the marriage-group. But already some changes can be noticed. The woman's affection for her husband and her grief over her daughter's death seem to be a little stronger than the mere familial connection requires in spite of the fact that she seems to lack the ability of expression. Again, the solidarity of the family is no longer so strong as it should be according to tradition, as is shown by the relative estrangement of the daughter in America.

512–17, FROM MARYANNA ŁAZOWSKA AND CHILDREN, IN POLAND, TO HER HUSBAND AND FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN AMERICA

512 PRZASNYSZ, November 27 [1913]

"Praised be Jesus Christus!" [etc.]

[Health; letter received.] You write me, dear husband, that I forbid you to come to our country. I don't forbid [dissuade] you at all, you may come at any moment, you have your own reason. Don't think that I live here luxuriously with these children. I buy only what they need absolutely. Why, they go to school, the girl goes to sewing [learns sewing]. She has still the same jacket. I only had new overcoats made for the boys. It was absolutely necessary, for now it is very cold. I must buy books and hefts for them. . . . . When one of them had no book the teacher told him not to come to the school. You see yourself how bad it is for you not to be able to write. Why, I don't pay for the school; this means much also. And then the shoes cost me much; we are 6 persons to be shod for winter.

Now I request you, dear reader, if you cannot read what I wrote here, do not answer, because I did not learn in a school, but in a barn; so write me, dear reader, did you read it or not.[1]

511 May 13, 1914

. . . . And now I greet you, dear wife, and you, my dear children, I greet you all with those godly words, "Praised be" [etc.]. And now I inform you that I received the letter from you for which I thank you very kindly, dear wife, and you, dear children. And now I inform you, dear wife, that I sent you 20 roubles on the 5th of May. I would have sent you more but my finger was wounded. For three weeks I have not been able to work, and I don't know how it will be further. Now, thanks to God and to God's Mother, this finger does not pain me so much.

And now you ask me, dear wife, how much money Walerka [probably wife's sister] earns, in America. Well, do you know, dear wife, that I spent for her more than $60, and from her wages I have not a cent. She served with a certain master and mistress for a month and they did not give her a cent for all this work of hers, and so $14 was lost. And now, I thank you, dear wife for buying this land, and I request you, dear wife, to describe to me how did you succeed with that business, and what about that annuity? Is it already finished or not? I request you, describe all this. You write, dear wife, about that Stasiek, whether you may take him or not. I leave it to your choice. If you are attached to him take [adopt?] him. And now I inform you, dear wife, that I will send you presently the attorney's power. And now I thank you, dear son, that you don't wish to come to America, because now in America there is terrible poverty. It [work] goes badly. I have nothing more to write, I only wish you all health, happiness and good success; what you wish for yourself from our Lord God and God's Mother, and I ask you for a speedy answer. *Got naj* [good night].

SZYMON JANKOSKI

[1] This is a rhyme in the original, and is proverbial.

As to the air [weather], up to the present we had frost, but now it does not freeze any more.

We salute and greet you together with your wife and children.

She died on January 19, and was buried on January 20.

MARYANNA ŁAZOWSKA

514 March 20, 1914

. . . . DEAR UNCLE: What does it mean that we have no letter? We have had no letter since December 5. What does it mean? Are they [the father and oldest sister] dead, or what? We wrote 3 letters and we had no answer to any of them. When Henka died we wrote a letter, but there was no answer. So please, uncle, write a letter at our cost—we will pay for it—and describe kindly what is going on, for we don't know, because we have no letter. We beg you for God's sake, tell us how it is. If somebody is sick there, describe everything. What happened with our father, that he does not deign to write a letter? When Genia [the oldest sister] was leaving, mother admonished her not to forget about letters. And she does not even deign to write a letter. We wonder how can a daughter be so mean.[1] So please, uncle, read them this letter. But perhaps they are no more alive. Then, please, describe to us kindly everything. Only we beg you for a speedy answer. We bow to you, uncle and auntie, and to all our acquaintances. We wish you a merry Easter. *Alleluiah!* The end.

[ŁAZOWSKA'S CHILDREN]

515 April 10, 1914

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND AND DAUGHTER: We received your letter, for which we thank you heartily, and the money also. Dear husband, Henka is dead.[2] She fell sick on January 5. . . . . There was one doctor and another and they tried to save her, and she wanted to live. Everything, whatever the doctor prescribed, she took everything. She had 40 cupping-glasses applied. In the last moment, dear daughter, she kissed your photograph, and kissed me on the face,

[1] The daughter evidently has not a much-developed familial feeling, or perhaps the fact that she is in America with her father and uncle accounts for her lack of longing for home.

[2] Her first letter with news of the death was evidently not received by the husband, who heard of it through the letter to the brother-in-law.

I don't spend a single grosz in vain. It seems to you that you have sent me much money. But I have paid so many debts. I have only trouble with these children, for they don't ask whether I have money or not, but require me to give them. I know myself that you are working hard, you don't need to admonish [remind?] me, for I did not buy anything for myself. [Food prices; news about pigs and cow.] Now, dear husband, I wish you a Merry Christmas. It would be better if we were together; it would rejoice us more. . . . . In going to bed and in rising remember us always, dear husband.[1]

Your most loving wife,

MARYANNA ŁAZOWSKA

513 January 29, 1914

. . . . DEAR [BROTHER] BOLEK: I inform you about my grief. When you wrote a letter and asked how many there are of our family, she spoke and asked us to write about her also.[2] She fell sick with measles, then she got inflammation of the lungs. There were doctors, but they could not save her. She was awfully clever, it is difficult to relate.[3] . . . . I am terribly pained. If it were by land, I would go afoot to America. . . . . Grandfather despairs continually after Henka's death and he cannot forget her cleverness. His health has got very bad; he cannot work and says that he will die soon.

[1] This request tends unconsciously to assimilate the familial and the religious attitudes. The moments after the end and before the beginning of the daily work are evidently the ones most favorable to an undisturbed and purely sentimental remembrance of home or God in a workman's life. At the same time the periodical character of this remembrance would tend to make of it both a habit and a duty. We understand better the meaning of this request if we remember that the normal life of the peasant is fully practical and always determined by the actual situation. Reflection and remembrance require in him a particular effort and an almost absolute freedom of mind and body. Therefore he carefully selects the time and place of reflection or remembrance and makes for these acts a self-conscious, intentional, and sometimes ridiculously ceremonial preparation. (See Vol. III.) As in letter-writing reflection and remembrance are combined, the same care is shown in the preparation for it.

[2] The meaning is that her anxiety not to be omitted in the enumeration of the members of the family was a foreboding of her death.

[3] Normal idealization after death. In children it is usually intelligence which is thus idealized, in grown-up persons, character. Perhaps this idealization in general is an unconscious attempt to justify individual grief when it goes beyond the limit assigned by the social regulation of the attitude toward death. At any rate it is an attempt to give *objective* reasons for subjective grief.

Now, dear daughter, I am writing to you. Why do you not write letters to us? Everybody wonders why do you not write. You know how to write and don't write. This makes me wonder much. I had sad holidays. When you were here it was not so sad, for I had always a companion. Grandfather bids you farewell, for perhaps he won't see you any more. . . . .[1] It is difficult to describe to you my experience which I had this year [the daughter's death].

MARYANNA ŁAZOWSKA

517 June 1, 1914

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: You write that you earn only for your living. Then come back to our country. Enough of this America. You write that you earn only enough for your own living; but who will earn for us? If you earn only for your own living, I cannot earn for mine. Wacek went to the first confession.

And you, dear daughter, you send only bows. Can you not write with your own hand, that you send only bows, as to strangers? Why, I am not your *kuma;* only a *kuma* sends bows for her *kuma.* When you were not in America I did not wonder that uncle wrote father's letters. But you are now with your father, you ought to write letters. You know how to write, only you don't want to. I was glad that I received a letter but I read it and, see here, from my daughter I have nothing but a bow!

Grandfather has been in bed for six weeks, I don't know whether he will recover. He dried out, he cannot eat any more. And thus I have such experiences and troubles this year. I have sown the garden myself. I have nothing but work and trouble. . . . .

Why, I asked you, dear husband, what to do, and had no answer. Grandfather is sick, money is needed, work must be done, and here there is nobody to work. For here a man is needed. So consider it and come. For it is impossible to live without somebody to work. . . . .

MARYANNA ŁAZOWSKA

Dear father, mother bought me a suit at the fair.

[WACEK]

[1] The grandfather's imminent death evidently provokes no grief because of his age. The social normality of death is increased with advancing age, to such an extent that life beyond certain limits becomes an anomaly.

raised her eyes on high and died. She finished her wandering here and went to eternity, to the Mother and to her Lord. But for me it is a terrible burden, for I loved her and she loved me. When I enter into the house, it is as sad for me as in a den. We grieved because we had no letter, we thought that you were dead. As to the weather in our country, it is so wet that one could drown dogs. In gardens water stands, it is impossible to sow or to plant. Many people died this year. Dear husband and dear daughter, we have sad holidays this year, it is difficult even to describe to you my sad experience of this year. I was in Mława, to buy seeds; I spent 50 roubles. . . . . Grandfather is also impaired in health and cannot work. I thank you heartily for the dollar. Remember, dear husband, not to forget about letters. . . . . Grandmother also grieves that uncle does not write.

[MARYANNA ŁAZOWSKA]

Dear father, what shall mother do with me, for I shall go to the school only till vacation, and mother does not know where to give me [in apprenticeship].

Mother is very angry with you [Genia] for not even sending a bow to the Morawiankis, for when the letter comes they always ask whether you send greetings for them.

[WACEK]

516 April 23, 1914

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: We are in good health, only grandfather is sick. He made a will, for he is in danger of life. He has willed me everything. This happened on April 22. I am to pay 100 roubles to the B.'s. . . . . So I beg you, dear husband, send me money, for it cost me already some 15 roubles. And I am writing already the sixth letter, and I have an answer to none. You see, dear husband, what difficulties and expenses I have; as soon as one is finished, another comes. So I beg you, send me this debt, for they may make a complaint against me, particularly she. Dear husband, nothing rejoices me [not even this will], for I have not my dear daughter. Wherever I go I am sad. At every moment I think about her and about you.

As to the air, it is warm. There is work to be done, and nobody to work, for grandfather is ill. Fences must be repaired and potatoes planted. The prices are very high in our country . . . . and work is difficult to get; only craftsmen can earn. . . . .

Maryna; and Rózia also, for a week. I went to them and asked them to give me their daughter [to help]. She was here for a week and cried every evening, and once she went home and did not come any more.[1] The knife which you made has not been found, nor the brush. When I went with you to Sącz, Franek took the brush from the shelf in the lobby, for Maryna and Swidzak saw it. But I don't say anything, because there would be trouble for us. . . . . I dream about you every night. Sometimes I dream that you come back angry and sometimes good, and I long very much. The day passes in working but in the evening I long much and at night I cannot sleep. . . . .

Samek did not thresh . . . . because I wanted him to thresh in the autumn, but he was angry, [saying] that if he did he could not go to Hungary through my fault.[2] In the field nobody does you any damage, nor does anybody damage the hedge. People say about you that you don't need that America, but nobody asked how you would pay the debts of which we have so many. Nobody believed up to the end that you would go. The Gazdas are very curious whether you will write to them. Franek comes here and looks sometimes, and when he has passed by it can always be noticed, for when he sees anything he does not omit the occasion [to take it].

About [your brother] Walek I dream also. He has not written to me; I did not receive any letter from him. . . . . Weddings are numerous in our village, but you will learn about them. Our boys remember you. They ask, "Where is father? Why does he not come?" Now I have nothing more of interest to write, but I greet you a hundred thousand times kindly and heartily, dear husband, and I thank you for that letter for which I have looked for so long a time. Be healthy. Let us see each other. Amen. I greet you [enumeration of all the relatives in America]. And if I don't do anything quite well, don't be angry with me. And it is well that you like it there, because I have grieved enough, thinking that you don't like it there. . . . . And Piotrek went with Samek to Hungary to work. And the Tyrkiels, when they both went to the fair, slipped into a

[1] She speaks here of her own family, not of her husband's. The unwillingness of her sisters to help her and the indifferent attitude of her father (see No. 520) show that a married couple may become isolated, not by their own fault, but by the fault of the family in which the solidarity is weakened.

[2] For season-work. The emigration to Hungary is regarded by the Galician peasants as particularly demoralizing.

The old solidarity of the family-group has not yet been superseded, but there is a marked beginning of the isolation of the marriage-group. Real personal love is expressed in the letters of the wife. The connection between the marriage-group and the rest of the family is relatively loosened, particularly in the case of the wife's family. But here again it is the husband who is more conservative in his familial attitudes. It is he who tries to re-establish a closer connection between his wife and her parents and sisters. Though he may be moved in this case more particularly by the desire to help his wife, this is certainly not his reason for asking his cousin not only to help but also to control her.

518–21, TO PIOTR OLSZAK, IN AMERICA, FROM WIFE AND FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND

518 November 12, 1913

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: [Health and success.] In my field [cousin] Jakób worked 2½ days with a single horse and then one day with two horses. He has not been paid at all and he will wait till you send him something, because I borrowed 25 [gulden] of money and bought a calf. I borrowed this money from Kólupa. And Jakób bought me a pig for 11 gulden. I have dug the potatoes out and have sown 7 measures of wheat and 1 measure of barley and 7 measures of rye. I have dunged and sown the field where the oats were. I borrowed 1½ bushels from Franek Batuch. He wants money [interest] for it, as much as he pays himself for borrowing from Tomasiak.[1] But don't worry, I shall manage everything. Since you went away neither father nor mother has been here yet, only

[1] She mentions the fact because it is not according to tradition to take money for lending of grain. Traditionally either nothing or a little grain should be taken as interest.

but I have bought one quarter of potatoes more, and I paid 1 gulden because they are that dear. But it does not matter much, for they were as dear in the first year when we were married. [Crops; weather; farm-work.]

E. Olszak

520 Brzeżna, May 5, 1913

[Dear Brother-in-law]: You write us to help her, but we help her as we can. Father continually abuses mother for going so often to her. When you went away Maryna was with her for four weeks, and we also go to her as often as we can. You know that when you were here you bought [things for her?], but she has no money to buy. Where can she get it? The worst are the children, because when she must go anywhere she takes the children to some house [or other]. If we are there, then it is better. But . . . . we have no hired man and there is never time [to help her in farm-work?], and she is very poor without a servant [passage obscure]. But nevertheless we help her as much as we can. She has no fat [for seasoning food] so we take her some whenever we can, when father does not know about it.[1] Now a pig has been killed, so we are sending her [some fat], because she has no money to buy it. You know, dear brother-in-law, the difference between that which is given and that which is bought [the gift is always of better quality]. [News about relatives and greetings from all the family of the wife.]

I, Rózia, have written this page, but, my dear brother-in-law, I beg you, don't be angry if the writing is bad and ugly. . . . .

Rozalia [Rózia[Gancarczyk

521

. . . . Dear Friend and *Kum* . . . . You write me to describe everything, so I will write you the whole truth. . . . . I have sown wheat for her upon the field where potatoes had been, and a measure of barley, and rye upon dung where oats had been, because she took one morg of field from Franek. And now I write you that she dug the potatoes out and has sown. . . . . Now you ask what she says about you. She says that she dreams about you every night. . . . . We have nice and warm weather. Yours [your wife] has called upon

[1] Cf. No. 518, p. 317, note 1.

tavern, and there a fight began. When Waligóra from Brzegi smashed with a glass upon the table, her [Tyrkiel's wife's] forehead was cut in two spots.[1]

Answer at once.

E. Olszak

519 May 23, 1914

. . . . Dear Husband: . . . . You write that you are worse, but you did not write what befell you, for Wojtek Jakubów wrote that your leg pains you but he did not write what happened to you, and I am so anxious because I don't know. But did you go in search of misfortune there? [To think that you found misfortune there!] I don't know what is going on. Only this I can say, Wojtuś, my dear heart, that when anything bad befalls you, a part of my heart is cut, from longing for you. If you only know that the work won't go or if you cannot work, get a little of that money and come, and if you have none perhaps Jasiek Kuzak will lend it to you. And when you come back, if God the Holiest grants you to come back, we could give back either the field bought from Tyrkiel or the other part. . . . . There is no reason to keep it. Why do you need it, particularly if you have no health? And so it seems to me. Whenever I think about you, my heart is cut. And this buying of land from this Tyrkiel is so useless, because you must work and pay this interest, while they live like lords and you cannot say anything to them.[2] If it were not because of this debt you would not have gone to America and would not suffer misery there. But if you are to suffer there and I here it is better, if you can, to come back. From them [the parents] also [there is no great help, such as was promised]. Sometimes one [sister], sometimes the other comes, but when they are most necessary there is none. When I go anywhere, I take the children, I take them to Popardzina [and] I close the house. I shall have enough grain,

[1] There is a mischievous joy in this description, resulting from the woman's animosity toward the Tyrkiels. The reason of the animosity is stated in the following letter.

[2] The reason of the woman's animosity toward the Tyrkiels is here explained; it is envy, because, by selling their land, that family found itself in a better position than the buyer. There is a peculiar and mixed attitude in these matters. The price of land is out of proportion to any possible income from it, and while the peasant, under the influence of the traditional land-hunger, still buys the land and pays the price, he bears a grudge against the seller who made him pay more than the land is economically worth.

STARKIEWICZ SERIES

Starkiewicz is not a farmer, but had probably worked in a manor, and when he went to America his wife lived with her relatives. This accounts for the woman's lack of economic interest. In their situation it is really not very important whether they have more or less money, for money assumes a real social importance only when it can be used to buy land or can in any way become a basis of an independent existence. And Starkiewicz can hardly hope to earn enough money to buy a farm.

The marriage-group is more isolated from the rest of the family than in the case of the Olszaks; probably their situation as manor-servants has helped to produce this isolation. Still the familial relations are rather close, since the wife can stay with her relatives. Conjugal affection has evidently considerably transcended the traditional limits.

522–28, FROM ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ, IN POLAND, TO HER HUSBAND, IN AMERICA

522 Uścimów, April 16, 1914

"Praised be," [etc.].

Dear Husband: I am very glad that I received your letter, but this kills me, that you don't write me exactly what is going on with you. Here papers write that there is war in New York, that houses are destroyed with bombs, ... that ships are stopped [do not bring emigrants to America] and that they say there: "We won't admit the strangers any more who came to spoil our land of money, they have taken enough of our money from our land." And you don't write me what is going on with you. Please, my dear, what became of Stasiek Olesiuk? Already 15 weeks have passed and he does not write any letter to her. Is he no longer alive, or what else became of him? For she grieves very much. Don't you know anything

us with your letter, and I did everything in the field for her and I have sown, and Franek keeps it [?] well. They have not divided it yet. And now I write you that I gave to Tyrkiel those 10 gulden. . . . . You ask whether people from Ciecewina [?] [the wife's family] call upon her. The girls do come, but nobody else. And now you ask how yours manages. So, up to the present she manages well enough, and how it will be further, I don't know. . . . .[1] She bought a calf for 50 crowns and keeps it, and now she intends to buy also a pig, and asks me to lend her money, so I will lend her some. And now I write you about this field, that I persuaded her to rent it from Franek, because Franek told me that he would let it be rented, and that he had [prospective] tenants, Wojtek Ciula, and Józek Junczak, and Franek Samek. So it is better if your wife takes it instead of having trouble with them [probably because of a too near neighborship]. So your wife took one morg of this field. . . . .

[JAKÓB]

[1] Example of a husband controlling his wife through his friends. In spite of the conjugal affection the individualization of the marriage-group is still incomplete, since other members of the family or community are not only allowed but asked to interfere.

asking me to lend him 100 roubles, but I am afraid. I said so—that I won't give them until I write to you and ask you, and he agreed. . . . . What do you say? Shall I lend it or not? He wants to borrow it on a note, but I should prefer to put it in the bank. . . . . I am very much satisfied that you intend to come when you have no work. . . . .

Now I inform you that your niece Kaśka is married already. They went to be married on Thursday before Pentecost, and the marriage-festival will be on the Holy Trinity Day. They say that they got married in Włodawa. The rest I will tell you in my next letter. . . . .

Your wife,

ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ

Read for yourself secretly, that nobody may know. I inform you about this marriage of Kaśka. They went to the wedding alone, and they have no sign at all whether they are married or not. When they came back, only then they went to our priest asking him to publish the banns. They had to take the certificate to the other church that their banns had been published, and only then the other priest was to give them the marriage-certificate. But our priest refused to accept [money] for the banns. So everybody says as he pleases—some that they were married, others, that they were not, for nobody was with them, and he is a true Ruthenian.[1]

524 June 21, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . I received your letter. . . . . It made me very sad that so many people are drowned. I think about your journey. May God only grant you to come back happily to us, may God guard you against any accident! . . . . I beg you, my husband, be so good, listen to me, come back at once. After this letter prepare yourself directly for the journey. What a life it is that you live! Your work is heavier than a stone. What of it if you leave your strength in a foreign country? Shall we take our money with us after our death? Why should we exert ourselves so? Pray God for

[1] The secrecy in which she communicates this news, the nature of the gossip, and the postscript to No. 528, show clearly the normal attitude of the peasant toward illegal sexual intercourse. There is no trace of a purely moral or religious condemnation, but a very strong feeling that such an intercourse, even if finishing with marriage, is *socially abnormal*. This standpoint will explain many peculiarities in this connection.

about him? I beg you, my dear husband, you have enough of this earning; come back to us. It will be sufficient for you. You have more than 300 roubles, and you can earn the rest here. You won't take the money with you when you die, and here you can also earn, if God the Merciful grants you health and allows you to live. Instead of working there and wasting your strength you can have here bread enough. If you don't want to serve [in a manor] go to Lublin, and there you can live. You don't want to have most [money] among other men. If it is difficult to return now, if it is true that there are such troubles, then come about autumn, and if perhaps you have sent me all your money, write me and I will send you for the journey. In our country now it is warm, trees are developing their leaves, people are sowing oats and barley and planting potatoes. . . . .

I inform you, dear husband, that somebody stole 100 roubles from stepmother, father's wife, from her chest. We all went to the priest, father and stepmother and sister Wiśniewska, and Wojciech, and Helena, and I. Stepmother was absolutely determined to have father testify under oath. Then father would say that his children had stolen the money. But the priest forbade him to make the oath.[1] . . . .

[ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ]

523 June 2, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: I inform you that I received the money, 101 roubles and 5 copecks, and I thank you heartily, my dear husband, for remembering me. Now I inform you that I will do nothing with this money and I won't lend it to anybody, for I am afraid. I will put it into the bank. Just now your godfather Kunak came to me,

[1] The oath is considered a perfectly sufficient proof even if it is false; the responsibility for its truthfulness falls exclusively upon the person who makes it, and it is a general belief that great calamities and even death are the result of a false oath. (The result is conceived partly as divine punishment, partly as immediate magical consequence of the sacrilege.) In this case the author believes that the stepmother's accusation against her stepchildren is either true or not true. In the first case her satisfaction at the priest's refusal to accept the oath—the only possible proof—shows that she does not consider the robbing of the stepmother a bad act. If she does not believe it is true, then she thinks her father either capable of a false oath or so henpecked that he would believe anything the stepmother says, and in either case absolutely estranged from his own children. In that case we have a situation resembling that in the Wróblewski series.

shall tell it to them. Write us the address of Stasiek. Only tell the truth, what is going on. We believe that it is true, for perhaps he had a very bad life and he attached himself to a sweetheart. . . . .

Your truly loving wife,

ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ

526 November 1, 1914

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: I inform you that I am in good health and our son is also in good health, and we wish you the same. Dear husband, I have sent you 3 letters, this is the fourth, and I have no answer. Are you no longer alive? I don't know myself what it means. It is not enough that I have grief here; I don't know anything about you. I will write you one letter after another, perhaps one of them will reach you, for I shall not live through this grief, thinking about you. And perhaps you are not there, so whoever opens this letter, please answer me at least a few words, whether he is alive or is no more there. . . . . I give my address. . . . .

ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ

527 November 7, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter. [Health; wishes.] Your son sends you bows and kisses your hands, saying that he is worried without his papa. Yes, dear husband, our son is already big enough and intelligent, he always remembers "Mamma, where is papa? Is it far? When shall we go to him? Perhaps tomorrow? Come, mamma, let us go!" . . . . Józefka thanks you heartily for the address which you sent her, and I thank you also for having written a few words about Stasiek. We are still curious to know what woman sits there with him, what is her name. Write me. What does it matter to you if I know who she is? . . . .

As to the war, there is now no battle near us. The nearest one was about Lublin, 3 versts away. Trawniki is burned, Janów destroyed, of Tomaszów only sky and earth are left. There was such a groan from shots here that the earth trembled. Now the battle is going on beyond the Vistula, toward Częstochowa. Radom is destroyed, but not totally, Puławy destroyed, villages destroyed. There was such a roar at night that it was impossible to sleep. Now

health, then we shall live. Whether you earn or lose, nobody will add or take away anything from you. I have a hog. They offered me 45 roubles; I want 50. Now I won't sell it until you come. Then we should have 313 roubles, and if we sold the cow there would be about 400. We would put it into the bank in Lublin, and we should live much better than now. . . . .

ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ

525 August 9, 1914

In the first words of my letter, dear husband, I inform you about my health and success. Up to the present we are still in good health, but we don't know how it will be further. I sent you already one letter in which I bade you farewell, like going to death, but still war is in some way held up for 2 weeks, only throngs of soldiers are passing by us afoot and on horses; we see no end of them. God forbid, what is going on with everyone of us! How much crying, how much sorrow! Everybody is so grieved, if you looked today upon anybody you would not know him. O my God, what we have lived to see! May God guard everybody against it! Now nothing else but everybody prays and prepares himself for death. The priests listen to confession, and people come during whole days and confess themselves. And nobody knows what will happen, whether we shall be sent away from here or not. Rich people go to far Russia; there is no war there, while here is the worst fire. We are all so afraid that we don't know how to live in the world. The reservists have been sent away. . . . even those are taken who are 48 years old. . . . . And nobody knows what will be. [The papers] write always that it is a European war, but we don't know. . . . . I beg you, answer this letter as soon as possible. And perhaps we shall no longer be alive when your letter comes. . . . .[1]

And now I beg you, dear husband, and Józefka, Stasiek's wife, we begged you in some letters to write us about him, but you did not answer this. We heard from the T.'s that Stasiek has a sweetheart and won't come back any more, for he has a sweetheart and will remain in America. His mother weeps very much, and his wife also. Answer me, whether it is true, but answer me the truth. Then we

[1] This whole paragraph is a good illustration of the peasant's feeling of incomprehension and impotence with regard to the phenomena of the social world outside of his own community. Cf. Introduction: "Social Environment."

We simply could not listen to this letter; everybody wept. . . . . Since then there has been no letter from him, perhaps he is dead. . . . . Now I inform you that people talked here that all the men have been driven away from America and that they are going to war. . . . . I thought that it was true and grieved. . . . .

ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ

Kaśka P. had already a daughter on November 17, while the wedding was in June.

no more shots are to be heard, for the German has been driven away. Only there is great misery in our country, everything expensive. . . . . Few people are left, only women, for men have been taken, some to the war, others to digging trenches, others to transports; horses and carts are all taken. . . . .

Your loving wife,

ZOFIA STARKIEWICZ

528 November 26, 1914

. . . . DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . Our son is healthy and rather big; he walks already in trousers. When I ask: "What is father doing in America?" he answers: "He cuts wood." I have a great distraction with him; he always talks to me. Were it not for the child I should perhaps not live through this sorrow. Dear husband, I inform you that I hired myself as a milk-woman, for both brothers-in-law are at the war. I have nowhere to live, and it is difficult to live in the village. And thus they will give me lodging and fuel, 1 cow to keep in the manorial stable, 3 bushels grain every quarter and 100 roods of field [for potatoes]. I take, it is true, a duty upon my head, for I must be there at every call, but at least I shan't have to work during the whole summer [for some neighbor]. For the keeping of one cow and for a few roods of field I had to work during the whole summer, while now I shall have peace with it. Whatever I earn [outside the milking hours] will be mine, and they will give me also 4 roubles a year. Yes, dear husband, it is painful for me, for I did not expect that I should have to serve.

Now I inform you that Józefka, Stasiek's [wife], went as a maid to a *pop* [Russian priest] to Kolechowicze. For the prices of everything are now very high; it is difficult to live in the village, when one cannot earn somewhere. First she had waited for a letter from her husband, but it is a year since she has had no letter from him; what should she expect from him any more? She went away on November 15. When she was leaving she cried very much; she simply could not say a word. She is so grieved, because she has a husband and must serve, while he works for some whore and lives with her. She is very much pained, she can hardly bear it. Yes, my husband, poor is her lot. I wept myself about her lot. . . . .

[Describes who went to war and perished.] Brother-in-law bade us farewell by letter and begged everybody to forgive his sins. . . . .

wrote to me asking me whether I was not angry. Now probably he is angry with me . . . . because I have no news from him at all and I don't know what has become of him. And now I address myself to you, dear son-in-law Stanisław. You ask me whether I am not afraid that you won't give me the money back. I am not afraid at all, for I understand what work means and what it means to be without work. [Conditions at home are bad.] Write letters to me, oftener, then I will also send you more interesting news, for it is my only diversion when you send me a letter. It is sad and painful to me that my daughters avoid me like some enemy [in return] for my education [of them], for my goodness, for my having fed them for some time when you went away.[1] . . . .

J. Z.

530 March 22, 1914

[Usual greetings; letter and photographs received.] Dear husband, you wrote me to try to get Kocieba's address, so I went to his wife. But she did not want to give it at all. She said: "Perhaps he will go to him." I said: "I don't know." Then she said: "He has had no work himself for two months."[2] And now, dear husband, you wrote me to say to *kum* Paweł that you did not work for 4 months. But *kum* did not believe it at all; he said that it was impossible, that you were not without work for so long a time. Dear husband, people don't believe that there is misery in America; they want to go without reflecting. *Kum* does not earn badly where he is now; he did not tell it, but *kuma* [his wife] told me that he earned up to 20 roubles every two weeks. Perhaps even in America he would not earn more, for people think that in America everybody is filled with cakes [by the employers] while, as we see, even in America it is not so sweet. . . . .

M. Kluch

[1] The strength of the familial attitude is seen in the fact that the old man seeks in his sons-in-law a support when the relation with his daughters is broken off. He needs a sanction for his second marriage and his sons-in-law are a substitute for his daughters.

[2] Not professional jealousy, as this developed only among craftsmen and the persons here are from the peasant class. The unwillingness shown here is therefore the sign of a partial dissolution of the old solidarity and hospitality among peasants. The feeling of obligation cannot be shaken off, but the duty seems burdensome and unpleasant, because no longer adapted to the general conditions of modern life. Cf. No. 474.

KLUCH SERIES

Partial isolation of the marriage-group, resulting, not from a particularly close relation between husband and wife, but from a disintegration of the family, appears in this series of letters. Already one branch of the family has been spacially isolated from the rest. We find no mention of any other member living in Lublin except the father with his wife and the two daughters with their husbands. And even this small group is dissolved by the father's second marriage. Consequently there remain only three marriage-groups, partly solidary, partly opposed to one another. And again we find the men more conservative, willing to keep at least in a certain measure the old group-connection.

529–32, TO S. KLUCH, IN AMERICA, FROM HIS WIFE AND FAMILY-MEMBERS, IN POLAND; AND ONE LETTER FROM THE SISTER-IN-LAW OF KLUCH TO HER HUSBAND, IN AMERICA

529 [LUBLIN], May 21, 1914

DEAR SON-IN-LAW: You ask me to describe to you the success of your wife, but I can write you no news at all, for I have never any occasion to call upon her, although she is my child. How can I call upon her since she drove me away from her? And secondly, when I go she avoids me as if I had done her some evil. She moved from here to Wesoła Street, there they live near each other, she and Pawłowa [Paweł's wife, the other daughter]. I send you only the news that *kuma* Staśkowa [Stasiek's wife] went to borrow money from her, and she said that she had not a penny; so probably there is misery.

And now, dear son-in-law, I beg you very much, write letters to me oftener, for it is my only comfort, when you send me a letter. For I have no comfort at all from my daughters. I respect you more, both my sons-in-law, than my own children. My older son-in-law

never knows what I do and even where I live. Since he moved away from me he has never yet called upon me. I could die and be buried and he would not know anything. And to you he writes that he knows everything, how I live. Let him rather guard his pile-driver [wife] lest they take it away from him for driving bridge-piles into the river-bed. I return once more, dear husband, to my going to Częstochowa. I went there with this intention, that you might be healthy and succeed well, and that we might see each other once more in our life.[1] And now, dear husband, I inform you about this war, that here nothing terrible has been as yet, but we don't know how it will be further. . . . . Only, wounded men are brought from morning till evening, and even by night, and the villages are burned around us. . . . .

M. Kluch

532 August 31, 1914

. . . . And now, dear husband, don't grieve and don't be very anxious, but here is a terrible misery in Lublin . . . . terrible trouble. Villages are burning around Lublin, dear husband! And we see so many wounded men when they bring them through the streets that our eyes are aching from looking upon these cripples. . . . . And we are quite stupid, dear husband, we don't know what to do. Some say to fly from the town, others say to sit upon the spot, some say so others so, but nobody knows what will befall us, except perhaps our Lord God alone. . . . . We received now fresh news that the pillows are to be taken for the wounded. From this fright we hid them in cellars, but then we learned that whoever hides the pillows will be beaten by the Cossacks, so we took them from the cellar and buried them in the earth. . . . .[2]

[Pawłowa]

[1] This is evidently a pretext. Her excuses show that going to Częstochowa is not a pure religious act—a pilgrimage in the proper sense—but a social and aesthetic enjoyment of the same character as attendance at religious ceremonies and parish festivals. The connection of religious life with aesthetic and hedonistic interests is very close.

[2] The fear of the authorities, as of an incalculable danger, stifles every other feeling; there is no place left for pity toward the wounded. This is probably one of the reasons why the peasant, ready for individual compassion and help, mistrusts absolutely any official charity organization, and is unwilling not only to contribute to it, but even to be helped by it, unless the help takes the form of a gift of money.

531 September 4, 1914

. . . . And now, dear husband, you ask me how much money I have. I have not so much. In the bank I had only 50 roubles and I had left only a few roubles for myself to live upon, and then you sent 100. So there would have been 150 roubles in the bank, but I did not put them in the bank, for, as you know, nobody accepts money and nobody gives it back [because of war]. Those 100 roubles which I had to pay to my father, I did not pay them either, for my sister had also a few roubles at home which she put in the bank, and now the bank refuses to pay them. She cannot, evidently, die from hunger together with her children [so I lent her money]. The old man, I know, is not without money, and as soon as everything starts again our brother-in-law will send [money to my sister] and I will give [the money] back to the old man. And now, dear husband, perhaps I have spent somewhat too much money, so don't be angry with me, for I was—I don't mean to reproach God with it—in Częstochowa and I bought a few things for myself and for the children, so the money was spent. And now you wrote, why did I not inform you that I was in Częstochowa. How could I have informed you, since you forbade me to write at all, so I waited until all this is changed, and I did not know what was the matter. . . . . But you listened to the absurdities of the old man [my father], and the old one avenges himself on me as much as he can. Surely he is so angry because I don't say "mother" to his linen-press [wife]. But you don't know the old one yet. The old one probably is trying to get us separated. As long as I worked I was good [in his opinion], and although he got married he wanted me to wash, to do everything, while his linen-press would lie and drink milk instead of water.[1] He would like his children to be wasted like salt upon boiling water, as he always said to our brother-in-law, "Well, you will be wasted like salt upon boiling water." . . . . Don't believe the old one, whatever he writes you about me, for he

[1] Before his second marriage the father had lived with his daughter and his claims to support and service were considered rightful. (Cf. Jabłkowska series.) But after his second marriage all his rights disappeared. He had not only to pay for his own and his wife's living, but his wife had to share the housework with his daughter. He complains of his daughter's ingratitude, but clearly his appeal is made rather in the name of an abstract morality than of a practically acknowledged social obligation. This is one of the clearest examples of familial dissociation resulting from a second marriage through the difficulty of assimilating the new family-member.

write to me, because I am very much troubled. I do not know what happened. And now I do not have anything more to write, only I would ask you to send to me three little crosses, and one little medallion, because I need only one little cross, but I should like to give it to my colleague, and furthermore I would ask you to put in about 6 hog-bristles, because when sometime my shoe is torn then I do not have any means to mend it, and if I want to buy [bristles] then you cannot find a store that has hog-bristles. Give this letter to my parents, or send it by mail, for maybe you do not go there. And now I kiss you.[1]

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

534 July 13, 1910

. . . . And now I inform you, beloved wife, about my dear health and success. Thanks to God I am well and the same I wish to you. I received your letter July 4, for which I thank you heartily, and I reply to you at once. July 9 I sent you 50 roubles, so that when you receive it then answer me.

And now, beloved wife, you were writing that you want to come to America, so now I do not advise you to come. It is better if I send you a few roubles for your use and if you stay, for the election of president will be soon and it may even be that I will come back to the old country.[2] And if, after the elections, in America times are good then I can send you a steamship-ticket, and if they are bad, then it may be that next fall I will come back to the old country myself. I pray God to help you just as I pray Him to help me in America. So when I stay in America until next fall and then come back to the old country, we shall have good living just the same. When you reply to me write me whether you received those 19 roubles, 43 copecks. I bow to you, beloved wife, and to the whole family. I wish health, happiness, and good success.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

[1] The letter is much more business-like and less personal than the following ones; the request to give it to the parents proves that it is meant to be a purely familial letter.

[2] Probably a pretext for not bringing her to America; possibly he was misinformed about date of elections.

The case is interesting on account of the evolution which goes on in the conjugal relation. In the beginning this has evidently a familial character which it gradually drops, leaving only some community of interest, personal affection, and sexual impulse. This change is probably due to the emigration of the man, and not alone to his separation from the family-group, but also to the tendency to economic advance which is expressed in the emigration. We have seen that this tendency always acts more or less destructively upon the familial form of economic life; at the same time it creates a new and exclusive link within the marriage-group, since it affects, of course, this group as a whole. We shall see this very well illustrated in another (Jabłkowska) series. But in the present case the influence of emigration does not express itself in this way. The personal conjugal connection is not strong enough to subsist when its familial basis has been dissolved and without the help of the attachment brought by common life. Gradually, therefore, the relations between husband and wife become cooler and seem to tend to a definite break.

533–46, FROM ADAM STRUCIŃSKI, IN AMERICA, TO HIS WIFE, IN POLAND

533 GLASSPORT, PA., June 9, 1910

In the first words of my letter, "Praised be Jesus Christus."

And now I inform you, beloved wife, that by the favor of God I am well, and the same I wish to you and the whole family. And now I ask whether you received the money, because on April 18 I sent to you 19 roubles and 43 copecks, and I have no information about it for 7 weeks. Now I send 25 roubles again, so when you receive it, then

536 December 20, 1910

Dear Broncia: First of all I greet you and I kiss you affably and I inform you that I received the letter and a photograph. This letter and the photograph rejoiced me very much. Those photographs rejoiced me very much more than if I should find a hundred dollars. I am very glad also that you took the picture together with Wichta. And I thank you very heartily for the wafer, and I also mutually divide the wafer with you and the whole family, and I congratulate you on Christmas, and let God grant us to live to see each other next year and to sing together "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to us on earth." That I wish to you, my sweetheart, and to the whole family, and I warmly pray God that he would deign to save us until that time. My dear angel! I inform you about my health as also about my success, that by the favor of God I am well and I wish the same to you, my love. And as to my success, it is just as formerly, only that after New Year the work is to go better. And now you ask, my dear little soul, together with Wichta and her mother, about my colleague—who is he, where does he come from, and what is his occupation, and how long has he been in America: Well, he has been in America as long as I have, and we work together at the same work, only we board separately; and he comes from Obryte in the old country, where he has a farm. He came from the army at once to America. In the army he was a higher hospital attendant, and by his usual trade he is a carpenter. So he can build houses well and do joiner's work, and his farm is not bad, because his father is pretty well off, and he is the only son, and there are two sisters, and the remaining sisters are married. I should not believe that, and would not write it, but I know from those who know him, and they know well what kind of success he has. And I was talking with him and he did not want to praise himself like others, for only those praise themselves who do not have anything. And I wish him for Wichta very much, if she will marry him. Because he is not a drunkard, or a villian either, and, secondly, she and all of you see him on the photograph, and you may judge what kind of man he appears to be. And I was showing him those photographs and he was very much pleased with her, and he says that it would be a pity if she would get into some bloodthirsty hands. And he intends to go to the old country with me after one year, in the fall. And so I ask sister not to let Wichta

535 November 1, 1910

DEAR WIFE: I greet you at least through this dead paper, and I kiss you, my love, and I inform you that I received a letter from you from which I learned about your dear health and also your success, and therefore I am very glad my beloved Broncia. And I also inform you about my health and success. By the favor of God I am well and the same I wish to you, my love. And my success is pretty good, only this, that I am lonesome without you, for what is the use of this work and money if I do not have and do not see you. So, I ask you, beloved angel, to send me your little face, that is a photograph, just as I send [one] to you. Although we are on the inanimate paper, nevertheless we shall see [each other] and in our souls we shall have our tender kisses, my dear love. Beloved Broncia, I send you my photograph together with that of my cousin whom I want to engage with Wiktorya Dobrzyńska, and I ask you, beloved wife, to take your picture together with Wichta [Wiktorya] and to send it to me, because if you will not take it together with her, then I will be very angry with you, because he [the cousin] sends one of his, for he is very much pleased with my description, and therefore he desires it [the picture],[1] and we will come back together. Now I write to you that with a second letter I will send to you 60 roubles. I do not have anything more to write but to send a bow to your beloved mother, sisters, brothers-in-law, brother, and sister-in-law, in general to the whole family, and I send hearty wishes. Let God grant them everything the best. And I bid you farewell, beloved Broncia, embrace you and kiss you, I, your sincerely loving husband,

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

You will give one photograph to my parents. There will be 5 altogether, 4 mine and one of my cousin.

I ask you for a quick reply and the photographs. Have photographs taken of both of you at once, and send them to me. I shall wait with impatience.

[1] The whole story of the matchmaking in this and the following letters is perfectly typical. The underlying attitudes are exactly in accordance with the tradition, only the means are new because of the new situation. This type of matchmaking is more conservative than the one which we find in the Butkowski series.

wife. I embrace you and kiss you, I, your husband loving you until the grave-board.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

[Greetings for the whole family.] And I ask you kindly to send me your exact name and address, because when I send money, then I will send in brother's hands [name], because it is more convenient for brother than for wife, on this account that there are mistakes. I ask for a quick reply.

538 April 17 [1911]

DEAR WIFE: . . . . You write me to come on your account. So when the work goes worse, then it may be that I will come, but I will work as long as we have not a thousand roubles. I will live in the most economical way, and you also do as you can, because it would not pay me to come [here] for one year. I came in order to earn something. Write to me whether you received 80 roubles that I sent to you. I am very lonesome without you. I kiss you, I, your husband.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

539 May 21, 1911

DEAR WIFE: . . . . You write me to come. Well, I would come, but I cannot come because the work is going very weakly, and, secondly, I send you the money, and now it is difficult to earn. I will see later. When I am able to earn at least for a ship-ticket then after All Saints Day I will come back. It is true, my dear wife, that you must worry, but I also worry still more than you, and I have more troubles, because I have to think about myself and about you, but it is difficult if God manages us in this way, that we cannot live in abundance. If it were not for that then we would not separate even for one minute, but for the piece of bread it is necessary to bid farewell to the family. So let God help me to earn and to come back happily to my native country. So, I pray God and do you pray also to this Creator and the holiest Mother, that we may be united together and live together until death. I do not have anything else to write.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

marry someone else. Also he sends his low bows to Wichta and to her mother and father and to the whole family, and he asks for Wichta's hand. I do not have anything more to describe and I ask you, dearest wife, whether you received those 60 roubles which I sent; so write me about that. And I bid you farewell, beloved Broncia. I send you my heartiest husband's feelings, and sincere wishes and bows. I greet you affectionately and kiss you my little dove. I, your husband, sincerely loving you until the grave-board.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

And I send bows and hearty wishes to mother, sister, brother-in-law, Wichta, Stasia, and to the whole home, to brother, sister-in-law, and to the whole home. And I congratulate you for the New Year and new happiness, and God grant my wishes. I, pleasantly recollecting you, and wishing you well.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

537 February 12, 1911

. . . . DEAR WIFE: I inform you that I received your letter, from which I learned about your health as also about success, and that rejoiced me very much. Dear wife, you write to me if [that you wish] this year would pass in one moment, and I also should be glad, only I do not know how it will be further, because I should like to save the most money I can, then it would be better for me than everything, because if I had a great deal of money then I should know how to start farming. So I think of staying some two or three years, because I should like us to have a thousand roubles.[1] Well I do not know how it will be on account of present times, because it is the fifth month since we have worked only half days, and they don't even always allow us to work as much as half a day. Now it is very bad in America. Only in ax-shops the work is going better.

At New Year we did not work for two weeks, and now we receive small working payments. And in regard to winter it is neither winter nor warm, in a word, scabby, with us also. The 9th of January there was a terrible thunder, and hail fell almost like potatoes. I do not have anything more to write, but to send you, beloved wife, bows and my dear greetings, and hearty wishes, and I bid you farewell, beloved

[1] The desire to advance is here explicitly limited to the marriage-group, and nothing is left of the familial attitude.

you receive the money then answer at once. I congratulate you for the holidays of Christmas. I do not have anything more to write.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

542 1912

. . . . Now I inform you, beloved wife, about your letter, that I received it, from which I learned only that you are well, and about nothing else. You do not write even whether you received the money and letter. Whether you are angry, I do not know. And I ask you whether you wish to come to America to me or not. So answer me. If you wish, then at once after Whitsuntide I will send you a steamship-ticket, unless you do not want to wait so long. If so come on yours [at your expense], because I do not have any intention of coming back unless there is great want in America; then and only then I would come back. Then answer me about your coming, or perhaps you do not have the desire to come, or perhaps something will hinder you, or perhaps your family does not allow you. Then answer, and I will know how to arrange. So if you should not come then I would stay some time, and I would send you [money] for living, just as I used to send to you.

I do not have anything more to write, but to send bows and hearty wishes to the whole family, and especially a bow to you, beloved wife, and also hearty wishes. I remain sincerely, I, your husband,

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

543 September 15, 1912

. . . . BELOVED WIFE: . . . . A few days ago I was very ill, and for this reason I did not reply to your letter at once. And I am very glad of your success, that you behave yourself well and manage well. Because I have also a few pennies, and now I work up to one thousand roubles, and just as soon as I save a thousand roubles, at once, in a short time, I will come back. And I ask you what kind of crops were this year. And prepare a lot of potatoes and one barrel of cabbage, and in addition feed up a hog, and when I come then we will kill this hog. We will boil potatoes and cabbage and we will put the rib pieces into the cabbage; and we will have comfortable shelter for the whole winter. And see that the feather bed is good, and the bed

540 August 21 [1911]

[Greetings; health; letters.] You write, "If I would come," and I think myself [it would be best] if I could come the soonest possible to my family, for I did not come to America to drink and lead a merry life, because I have a family in the old country. When I recall it then the tears run. But I will work as I am able, and when nothing is left for me [in America], then I will come back. I inform you that the 15 of August I sent 3 photographs and the 19, 100 roubles. Write whether you received it. I sent a handkerchief on your name-day, and because I do not know whether it will reach you or not, write to me. I sent two letters together, one with the handkerchief, and another without a handkerchief.

I do not have anything else to write.

[Adam Struciński]

541 November 26, 1911

Dear Wife: I inform you that I received your two letters, and in both of them I heard nothing else but if I would come back. You see, my dear treasure, although you write to me that I love the money better than you, nevertheless you see that I love you and the money, because if without money then I should not like you either, and when I have a great deal of money then you also will like me still better than without money, because when we have a great deal of money then when we fill ourselves up by eating and drinking, and when we dress up, then it will be pleasant to look at each other; then we will love each other still better and we will put lips on lips, and the heart will beat, and then the love will be better than it was when we were hungry and ragged, because when a man is hungry then he does not like to love.[1] So you see, I want to work for some time yet because the work is going not the worst, and I may earn as I did not before. So I will stay some couple of weeks, and you, my dear, pray God for health, and this time will fly away for me and for you as one moment. So I send you 25 roubles for the holidays. Out of this money give 2½ roubles to each mother, and with 20 roubles procure what is necessary for you, and do not walk hungry and cold, because I attempt to provide so that there will not be any hardship. When

[1] This hedonistic attitude, rare among the peasants, shows a relatively far-going individualization.

gone already, but I received a letter from my brother to send him a ship-ticket, and he asks about that. He says that he has to work very heavily, and apparently he does not have any possibility of helping our parents. I sent him therefore a ship-ticket and I expect him to come to me in the holidays, and so when he comes then I will be going back to my country at once. Dear wife, you make yourself so mournful that you must suffer. I suffer more, because I must work like a mule, and I do not have any comfort either. So it is not as we want, only it must be as we can. It is true that I promised you too much about my coming, but what could I do if it did not come out as I thought. But I hope that in May I shall be in my home, if not sooner. I beg your pardon, dear Broncia. Do not be angry with me, forgive me, and when I come then we will reconcile. I am ending. I send to you my kiss and embrace. Will it do? Bows to the whole family. I remain sincerely your husband, brother, brother-in-law,

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

546 [No date]

DEAR WIFE: [Greetings; health and success good.] Don't worry about me, because when I work then I do not want to bring you to America, because here in America it is very difficult for a peasant [man], because as long as he is well then he always works like a mule, and therefore he has something, but if he becomes sick then it is a trouble, because everybody is looking only for money in order to get some of it, and during the sickness the most will be spent, and in old age, when one has not health or money, then there is trouble again. So when I have money today, then if something bad happens, I take a train and go ahead there where I came from, but it is not so with a woman. Now the work will go 2 months at most, because there are elections of the president. As is known, there will be very hard times and want. The fight is seen already among those who run for president of the Republican side. I will not stay and I will run away for the winter to you under the feather bed. I have the money, so that I shall not worry about anything, and as to what you write about what you think, I do not know. So, do not write me that at all unless you think of doing as you did when I was in Prussia. But also about Prussia do not write anything nor about my parents either, for when I received your letter, and I did not have a colleague who would

strong, because from [eating] rib pieces, potatoes, and cabbage the man is heavy, and if the bed were weak then it could break down. Only do not take this trick badly [do not be angry at my joke.][1] Now in regard to this man about whom I wrote, I thought that he went to the [old] country, and he is still here, because in the spring, when there was a strike in our factory and he could not get work in the same city he went to another city. And now he wrote a letter to me and he was asking about Wichta, whether she got married. And he sends bows to her, and he wrote that he will soon come to Glassport, and we intend to go together to the old country. So let Wichta write something, and I will send [it] to him. I do not have anything more to write, only I send my bows to brother and sister-in-law, to brothers-in-law, and sisters-in-law; and hearty wishes and a low bow to Wichta's mother and to the whole family, and especially a bow and hearty wishes to you, beloved wife. Remain with God. I, your husband,

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

I ask for a quick reply. *Gut baj.*

544 October 28, 1912

DEAR WIFE: . . . . I was already starting to go to the old country, but I detained myself in order to earn some 100 roubles more, and because the war is going to be, so that if they should have to take me into the army then it is better to be in America. When there is peace then I will come at once, because I have worked enough. Answer me whether the reservists are taken already, because we read the papers and we know that Russia sent an army of 80,000 to the frontier of Asia. You see, beloved wife, I am afraid of being taken. Now I write you that in two weeks after the letter I will send you the money for "celebration." Beloved Broncia, when there is peace then we shall soon see each other. I do not have anything more to write.

ADAM STRUCIŃSKI

545 February 18, 1913

. . . . DEAR WIFE: I inform you that I received your letter and I am answering you at once and I inform you that we shall not see each other before my brother Andrzej comes to me. I should be

[1] Sexual allusions are completely avoided as long as marriage is a familial matter. Here we find only a vestige of the familial attitude in his asking pardon for his joke.

BORKOWSKI SERIES

The Borkowski case is a particularly interesting example of a situation in which the marriage-group has almost ceased to be a part of the family and is no longer kept together by the familial organization, while the personal connection of husband and wife is not yet strong enough to make the group consistent.

The Borkowskis are city people. We do not know when the families of the husband and the wife came to Warsaw —it may have been thirty years ago or three hundred—and their attitudes give us no cue to this problem. The fact is that we find here an almost complete lack of traditional elements, except religion. But this may be the result either of a loss of peasant traditions in the city or of a gradual disintegration of old city traditions under the influence of modern life. At any rate, Borkowski is a factory workman, not a guild member, so he has not even the vestiges of the traditions of the handworker class, which would be slight even if he were a member of a guild, as we see in the case of his friend, Stanisław R.

Although Borkowski and his wife have numerous relatives in the city or in the neighborhood, the members of neither family care much for one another. The lack of solidarity goes so far that Borkowski's brother has not written to him during a period of twenty years; otherwise the letters would have been preserved with the others. Compare this situation with the one which we find in the Markiewicz family. When Teofila, the wife, finds herself in an exceptionally bad situation, no one among her relatives helps her. They avoid even social relations with her, as a boresome, poor, ill-dressed, complaining old woman.

write me a letter, then I answered myself, though with pencil, and you think—God knows what. And if you want money then I will send you a few roubles, because not long ago you were saying that you had [money]. Now you say that you have none. Write me how much money you have. And I did not send to you for such a long time because I wanted to save something. I do not have anything more to write.[1]

[ADAM STRUCIŃSKI]

[1] The last letters are filled with excuses and delays. The man apparently likes to be in America and prefers to be there alone. We are not to assume any definite interest in another woman, but possibly he is sexually demoralized. It is not the character of the peasant to prepare a break with his wife and lead gradually up to it, or to deceive her and at the same time write affectionately. Desertions of wives in Poland by husbands in America are not infrequent. Perhaps usually, as in this case, the desertion (if it comes to that) is not planned, but the moment does not come when the stimulation to go is stronger than the stimulation to stay.

express himself, must have appeared to him rather narrow—much more so, indeed, than in the case of a peasant, with the variety of work and the many concrete social interests which village life can give. Further, he seems to have felt rejuvenated in America, away from his wife, who was probably older than he (cf. No. 563). He dresses better, shaves his beard, and, as his wife expresses it, looks ten years younger. Probably, almost certainly, he has here a relation with another woman. Hence after a certain time there is nothing more left of the old affection toward his wife, and though for almost twenty years he writes from time to time and sends some money, he does it partly from pity, partly from a feeling of moral obligation. He does not make any great sacrifice; during the whole time he has sent her less than five hundred dollars, i.e., less than twenty-five dollars a year. But we must remember that he lacks any really strong motive to help her, for the feeling of obligation, not backed by the sanction of social opinion, cannot be strong in a man on this level of culture. And he feels more and more that his wife is a useless burden to him —not only on account of money, but also as the only link with a past life which he evidently wants to forget, and perhaps also as a hindrance to marrying someone else.

As to the influence of social opinion, there is an interesting difference between his behavior and that of a peasant, expressed by the fact that for so long a time he keeps up his relations with old friends of himself and his wife and still does not help her enough to prevent her becoming a pauper. Manifestly he does not care much for the opinion of the people at home, the demands of this opinion on him are neither strong nor consistent (cf. No. 586), and he does not at all identify the social position of his wife with his own. Now, a peasant would either send his wife money enough to satisfy the opinion of the community and to enable her

There is also nothing that could take the place of the community which we find in the country or in small towns. To be sure, everyone has a circle of acquaintances within which there is gossip—a poor imitation of social opinion—but there is nothing like the continuous relationship between the inhabitants of a village, and no periodical meetings. Social opinion has therefore little power, consistency, or vitality.

Clearly in these conditions marriage becomes a mere individual matter; its social side is limited to the religious sanction, to the few uncomplicated relations between the marriage-group and the loose social environment, and to an exceptional intervention of this environment and of the state in the rare cases of criminal behavior. Within the large limits marked by these few social forms there is place enough for all the varieties which the relation between two individuals of different sex may assume. The nature of this relation will, of course, depend upon the personalities of the members and the sphere of their common interests. In the actual case, where the personalities of husband and wife are poor in traditions and poor in culture, their connection must be rather weak. When the first sensual attraction has disappeared, habit and the common interests of everyday life are the only links. But the emigration of the husband interrupted both of these, and a gradual dissolution of the conjugal bond became a psychological necessity.

We do not know the evolution through which the husband has passed, but we can easily guess it from the woman's letters. He evidently found a new sphere of interests in America; being a relatively intelligent, although not educated, man, he adapted himself successfully to the new conditions, and his life in Warsaw, where he did the same work but earned less and had less opportunity to

personally. But still he is expected to return or to take her to America, and thus her position is not yet so very low, because provisional. When, however, time passes and she remains alone, her social environment no longer takes her husband's possible return into account, and then her position depends exclusively upon his attitude toward her; every letter, photograph, sum of money, which he sends influences her social standing positively, as proofs that he is still solidary with her, while every proof of his desire to get rid of her pushes her down in social opinion. Naturally, it would be quite different if she were able to fight for a position by herself, without being so exclusively dependent upon him. But, being a city woman, she is afraid of heavy work, not only because of its physical hardship, but also because she believes that it would lower her still more. On the other hand, she is unable to progress by skilled work and, moreover, apparently lacks energy. Being so completely dependent upon her husband, she wants him for herself alone; she seems to feel that every expression of his personality outside is a loss for her, she is hostile to all his friends and relatives.

All these features of the Borkowski marriage-group are typical, because resulting necessarily from the given social situation and the general characteristics of the personalities. Now, if they had children, the whole situation would be different. We shall find, indeed, in the next series analogous characters and an analogous social situation, and we shall see what an enormous importance the children have there—an incomparably greater one than in the traditional familial organization.

to maintain a social position in accord with his own, or would break off all relations with her, with his friends, and with his family in order to avoid all touch with the opinion and condemnation of his community.

The letters give us a very good insight into the evolution of the woman. Without the backing of a family-group she never feels that she has a right to claim her husband's fidelity, help, and protection. The higher moral view with regard to the conjugal relation is clearly not more strongly developed in her than in her husband and cannot be a substitute for the absent social norms. In the beginning, she assumes implicitly that he will care for her after his emigration, since he cared for her at home. Later, when she realizes that things have changed, she appeals, not to his conjugal duty, but to his promise to help her and to his generosity. Still later, appeals to pity become her only resource, and when even this proves insufficient, she uses additional arguments—promises of God's reward, threats of suicide, etc. Love is at no time appealed to. The nature of her claims changes also. First, she wants and expects her husband to come back rather than to take her to America; later, she would be glad if he let her go to him, under someone's care (her affection is not strong enough to overcome her fear of the journey); still later, she ceases to expect to live with him and hopes only to see him once more; finally, it is enough for her to have from time to time his letters and money.

Another interesting point is her relation to her environment. As she has no social standing as a member of a family-group her social position is based exclusively on her marriage, i.e., upon the position of her husband, upon his attitude toward her, upon their having a home, etc. As soon as her husband leaves, her position is immediately lowered; she has no home and she does not represent much

548 April 12, 1894

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter on April 2, which found me in the best of health, and I wish you the same with my whole heart. Up to the present I thought and rejoiced that you would still come back to Warsaw, but since you write that you won't come, I comply with the will of God and with your will. I shall now count the days and weeks [until you take me to America]. May our Lord God grant it to happen as soon as possible, for I am terribly worried. Such a sad life! I go almost to nobody, for as long as you were in Warsaw everything was different. Formerly we had friends, and everybody was glad to see us, while now, if I go to anybody, they are afraid I need something from them and they show me beforehand an indifferent face. . . . . They all do it, even those who were so good formerly. Now they show themselves, as they are.[1] You write me to try to earn something with Władzia. But I have not earned yet a grosz from her. She says that people beg her to give them work for living alone, while I must pay 2 roubles for lodging, besides board.[2] So, my dear, I beg you, describe to me everything in detail, what I can take with me, what clothes, whether it is worth taking the fur, the [photographs in] frames and other trifles. I will take the image and the cross, but I have heard that it was forbidden to take the chest. So please describe everything to me exactly. You write to the Lukas that I write so seldom, but always when the Lukas write I ask them to write something from me. Evidently they don't do it. . . . .

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

[1] As we have stated in the introduction, Teofila, not being a member of a family-group, can have no other social recognition than that which results from her own or her husband's position. Her husband being away, the recognition which she had as his wife is reduced to almost nothing as is shown by the behavior of her environment and of which she complains. There are still two chances for her to keep at least some social standing. One is her husband's fidelity—sending of money, writing of letters, etc.—in a word, proofs that he remains solidary with her in spite of the separation and that the separation is only temporary, that he will either come back or take her to America. The second chance is to acquire a personal position by her own work.

[2] Władzia is a cousin who has a millinery or dressmaking shop, in which Borkowski wants his wife to work as a seamstress.

547–86, TO WŁADYSŁAW BORKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM HIS WIFE, IN POLAND, AND SOME LETTERS (578–86) FROM ACQUAINTANCES

547 WARSAW, July 21, 1893

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter on July 4, which found me in usual health. Up to the present I live with the Rybickis. I am not very well satisfied, perhaps because I was accustomed to live for so many years quietly, with you alone.[1] And today you are at one end of the world and I at the other, so when I look at strange corners [surroundings], I don't know what to do from longing and regret. I comfort myself only that you won't forget me, that you will remain noble [generous] as you have been. You wanted me to go to the Borkowskis [his brother]. I was there. If they had only asked about you themselves! But nobody said a word, only I related.[2] Stasiak . . . . asked, but nobody else. Borkowski's wife said that you took 27 roubles for the wardrobe and 15 roubles for the chest of drawers, and she refused to add anything. She said to Stanisław that you had taken enough. The small altar and the clock were taken by Filip from Praga and he gave 20 roubles. I have nothing more to write, only I beg you, my dear, write to me as often as you can about yourself, whether you are in good health and how you succeed, for this is my only pleasure; I have no other. I have only the sort of friends who think that I own thousands and from time to time someone comes to me, asking me to lend her a dozen roubles. . . . . And everyone would borrow for eternity; I know them already. . . . .

And now I bid you goodbye and wish you health and every good. Only don't forget me.

Your sincerely well-wishing wife,

[TEOFILA BORKOWSKA]

[1] Isolation has become habitual and desired. We do not find this in the peasant family. Of course some privacy is always sought by the marriage-group, but only for matters which, like the sexual relation, are more or less reserved by tradition as beyond the reach of other people's intrusion. And the amount of privacy claimed by the marriage-group from the family is much smaller than that which it requires from the community. In short, privacy for the peasant is nothing but a certain socially sanctioned limitation of the social character of individual life. Here, on the contrary, it becomes a voluntary individual seclusion from the social life in general.

[2] The disintegration of the family is certainly real, even if in the given case the writer puts a particular emphasis upon the indifference of her husband's relatives, in accordance with her tendency to keep him exclusively for herself.

good you did me by sending that money, you saved me from some strange despair, because I waited for this money as for the salvation of my soul. Twelve roubles out of this money went for rent alone, for I must pay 3 roubles a month. Now they won't take less for a person, because apartments have gone up. And I have a corner where I must sit upon my bed. And in renting they say at once that I cannot cook, and ask me whether I will sit much at home. I have often such conditions for these 3 roubles that I cannot even boil a little water for my tea, but must remain the whole day living on dry food. The first 11 roubles I received from Berlin, the next time 10 from the consul, both without any letter, so I thought that perhaps it was not from you, this money, and I did not know what to do. You promised me to send your photograph. I hoped always to see you at least upon paper, but I was deceived. I sent you the books; it seems to me that they are good. Now I have nothing more to write you, only I wish you every good and every happiness, whatever you want from our Lord God. For I know this, that if you get on well I shall also get on well; so you said when you were leaving.

Greeting from all acquaintances, the good ones. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

552 May 13 [1896]

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter . . . . together with the photographs. You won't believe me what a joy and comfort it was for me when I saw you. It seemed to me in the first moment that I saw you alive. I received the money, i.e., 12 roubles, on April 1. I thank you for it heartily. Dear Władek, you asked me to answer you at once when I received the letter and the money. I wished to answer at once . . . . but I caught such cold that for 3 weeks I did not rise from my bed. Now, thanks to our Lord God, I am better. And so, my dear, from the money which you sent me I intended to pay 4 roubles of rent and to buy shoes for myself, but I had to spend it on medicine and a doctor. So, my dear, I beg you, if you can, send me a little money as soon as you receive this letter, for I need it very much. The Czub. thank you very much for the photograph, Kawecki has probably answered you himself, for he was to write at once. You pleased everybody very much, acquainted as well as unacquainted people, you look so well.

Now, dear Władek, as to my coming to you, if it were possible, I should be very glad, but imagine what a terrible difficulty it would

549 August 8, 1895

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . You won't believe how much I suffered when you did not write for some months. I thought that I should not live long enough to read your letter, but when I received the letter from you I wept with joy. But after reading it sadness overwhelmed me again. I thought that you had forgotten and would not write your address. But, thanks to God, it seems to me that my heavy sorrow and my terrible want are over. There is no work this year with Dobska at all, so I don't sew there at all. I earn sometimes a few złoty, but what does it mean when I must pay 3 roubles rent a month [in a room with three or four others]. In one place I had no money to pay for the lodging, and they took my bed. Now I sleep upon a borrowed bed. Moreover, they have levied hospital taxes in Warsaw, 1 rouble for a person yearly, so I must pay, for if you do not pay you must pay later 4 roubles of fine.

Before I received your letter, I went to the consul more than once, begging him to find you, what is going on with you. But he did not want to search for you until I paid him 5 roubles. But I did not have them and I had to remain in sadness. My dear, you ask for my photograph, but I can send it only when you send me a few roubles. But I beg you, send me yours as soon as possible. . . . .

[TEOFILA]

550 October 2, 1895

DEAR HUSBAND: To the last letter which you wrote on July 13, I answered at once with great joy, for I thought that after so many months of my sorrow and crying and different other troubles the sun shone for me. But I see that it only joked, that I must suffer so up to my death. Up to the present I have never annoyed you [about money], for I knew that when you could, you would send me a few roubles. So I beg you, if you can, send me a few roubles as soon as possible, for I am in a situation without issue. . . . .

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

551 January 28, 1896

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . You reproach me for not answering you at once. My dear, I evidently did not do it through negligence, for you won't believe, I have not words enough to tell you, how much

before Easter. I sent you a letter on May 13, almost begging for a few roubles, for I spent these on medicines and the doctor, but not only you did not send me anything, you did not even answer, so I don't know what it means, whether you are offended with me for having asked you for these few roubles. But you have written yourself that you will send me [money] every month, and therefore I was more bold in asking you for it.[1] . . . . So please answer me whether you received that letter and the books which I sent you before. The letter was registered, so it must have reached you, and if it did not reach you . . . . write me and I will take a complaint to the post-office. . . . .

Your always loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

554 December 2, 1896

DEAR HUSBAND: I inform you that I have already left the hospital and I am healthy enough, and I wish you the same. I received in the hospital the letter which you wrote on August 31. I rejoiced very much, for every letter from you is a day of joy for me, and I have no other joy now. Only I am very much pained that you reproach me for writing only about myself and nothing about any relatives or acquaintances. But what can I write about them, since they are all *państwo* [originally "lord and lady," then in general, "gentle people" or "rich people"] as compared with me, while I am quite alone, without husband, without home. When I left the hospital I did not know what to do with myself, without money and almost without roof, for I did not know what to do and what to pay for the lodging with. I remained for 2 months in the hospital and had to pay 6 roubles of rent. She remitted one rouble, 5 were left. So I begged her, and promised I would pay her when you send some money. But nobody cares for me, nobody helps me, for they know that I have no chance to pay them back. And you reproach me for not informing you about them. Why, he is your own brother, he could ask sometimes what is going on with you, once at least, send one of the children to me or write to you. And my family is the same; they are afraid I will ask them for something. Czab. came to me once, to the hospital, and I know that they are all in good health.

[1] She does not consider it her husband's duty to maintain her, as a peasant woman would do, but appeals merely to his promise.

be for me to start quite alone on such a far journey. You know that I am not very bold, nor very talkative either, so it would be very difficult for me to find my way alone.[1] For as to Rafalski, he won't go now; his plans are changed. He is offended with you for having written him about land instead of writing how much you earn and what work is there. He says: "Does he do any favor to me? He will send me a ship-ticket when I send him 20 roubles. But if I wish I can buy a ticket myself." My dear, you ask me why do I not write you about Karol and his wife. I have nothing to write about them, for I know nothing. They don't come to me at all, they are afraid I might want something from them, so I don't go to them either. Since you left they have not invited me to any holidays or little parties which they arrange often. You know, Władek, I pray to God continually that He may inspire you with the wish to come back to Warsaw. After the crowning there will be amnesty, so you can come back, and you would certainly have work, for in the factory they are working on holidays and nights, and everybody says that it will last for some years still. So, my dear, perhaps you will change your mind and long for your native country. I heard that you promised it to Rafalski. I would wait patiently; I have suffered for 3 years, I would bear it for one year more. . . . . I have kept the box, the image of God's Mother, and the photographs as tokens. I did not sell your fur coat either; I keep it, for I think that you will perhaps walk in it about Warsaw. Although I was already in a hard need, I did not sell it. . . . .[2]

My dear, don't forget what I asked you for, because I need it very much and very soon. . . . .

[TEOFILA]

553 July 10, 1896

DEAR WŁADEK: . . . . I don't know what it means that you don't answer the letter in which I thanked you for the photographs and the money which you sent me, 10, 11, and 12 roubles, the last

[1] Her helplessness, in contrast with the energy of country girls who undertake the journey to America even to marry unknown men (cf. Butkowski series) is perhaps partly constitutional.

[2] The woman's desire to see her husband back in Warsaw rather than to go to America is probably conditioned by other factors than her fear of traveling alone. She can imagine future happiness only in the same familiar conditions and environment in which she had lived happily before. Perhaps there is also some desire to get restitution for all the humiliations which she has to suffer, to have the same people who now neglect her be the witnesses of her triumph.

you don't write and won't return to your native country. Why, you are a Pole! . . . . In Warsaw there is an enormous movement, all factories full of work, and for you also work is ready. Only come! . . . .

I thank you once more heartily for the money, and the next time when you send me some money I will go to the photograph[er] and send you [my photograph].

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

556 September 26, 1897

DEAR HUSBAND: For God's sake, what does it mean that you don't answer? Kawecki called on me, for he also wrote to you and you gave him no answer, so he came to ask what you write to me, what is going on with you and how you succeed. He thought that you don't want to write to him because you have got very rich; he was curious, for he did not know how to judge you. Only when I told him that for half a year you have not written to me, he was also pained, fearing that something had happened to you. For I also grieved terribly [thinking] what had happened to you. For I don't think that you could have forgotten me totally, while I write you such supplications every time. So I repeat once more my begging. Answer me as soon as possible and send me anything you can. For if I were not in need I should never annoy you, but our Lord God is the best witness how terribly hard it is for me to live. Those few roubles which you sent me a few times are only enough to pay the rent for some months, because there I must give 3 roubles a month at once. As to board, clothes, and shoes, they are earned with such a difficulty that you have surely no idea. And I must eat every day. There are mostly days in my present situation when I have one small roll and a pot of tea for the whole day, and I must live so. And this has lasted almost 5 years since you left. If I were a plain country woman I would go to wash linen or floors, or in summer to work in a garden, but you know that I am unable to do it and I have no strength, while sewing by hand is terribly hard.[1] So, my dear husband, don't

[1] The inability to do hard work is to some extent real, but to some extent only imagined with the women and men who belong to that lower town and city class which is more or less specialized in finer handwork or small trade. There is a peculiar rivalry between this class and the peasants in the country. People of this class feel that only the relatively finer character of their work and dress keeps them in a certain regard above the country peasant, while by hard labor they

My Władzio, don't be angry that I send registered letters, but you see you write so seldom I should think that my letter did not reach you and I could not learn, while so I am certain that you received it and I live at least with some hope that you will answer me. And now I am waiting for an answer to that letter which I wrote you when I was in the hospital, and I know that it reached you for it was registered. Evidently, dear Władek, you are so angry with me that you have not written for some months, while I sent you almost not a letter but a petition. So don't be angry with me, my dear husband, for to whom shall I appeal? And you made me bold yourself, for you promised me to send me a little, and I don't ask much, anything [a little] at least. And I beg your pardon once more, Władek, don't be angry with me, but answer me as soon as possible. As to the photograph, perhaps I shall earn a little, but only in the spring; then I would send you one, for now I have no money to go to the photograph[er]. . . . .[1]

[Teofila Borkowska]

555 May 19, 1897

Dear Husband: . . . . I received your letter together with the money, i.e., with 12 roubles . . . . for which I thank you heartily, dear Władek. After receiving those 20 roubles, which you sent me last year, I wrote you 3 letters, two registered, the last with a single stamp, so I beg you much, answer me whether you received them all, particularly that non-registered one, for it seems to me that letters often don't reach you. Now, dear Władek, you write me that you are not sure whether I receive your money, because I don't write myself [with my own hand], only Mrs. Sliwińska [the woman from whom she rents] does. But you can be as sure as if I wrote with my own hand. She gives me every letter as soon as she receives it from the post, whether with money or not, and address them as always, because they are sure people. . . . . I intentionally begged somebody else to write this letter in order that you might believe that I receive your letters and money. I beg you, dear Władek, write to me more often, for now you have not written for so long a time. My dear, write me whether you intend ever to come back to Warsaw? I often hear that some husband comes back to his family, and even whole families return. When I hear it my heart almost bursts open, because

[1] The absolute and painful dependence of the wife could hardly be better illustrated than by this letter.

your intentions. I pray to Him every day for you. . . . . I greet you heartily.

Your always loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

Good by [in English; imitated from his letter].

558 September 12, 1898

DEAR HUSBAND: First I must thank you heartily for having helped me so much. I did not expect it at all, only I always thought that perhaps you had no money yourself and you could send me none. I only prayed to our Lord God to give you health and to bless you in all your intentions, for I knew that you would not desert me. And so it happened, for which I thank you heartily once more, and may our Lord God help you further in everything.

First I received the 15 roubles about which I wrote you. Then I received 25 roubles, when you corrected the name. And now I received 28 roubles through the Commercial Bank, for which I made some purchases, because for a long time I had bought nothing [no clothes, etc.] for myself. I am very happy through all this, but I should be still more happy if we could see each other some day, and if it were in Warsaw.

You ask me what is the news in Warsaw. You would not recognize Warsaw—such movement and work, hundreds of big new houses. On Marszałkowska Street a score of very splendid houses, and a very beautiful church on Dzielna Street, and in the neighborhood of the Jesus Hospital they begin to build a church, and on Czerniakowska Street a church, and a politechnical school is opened in Warsaw, such as up to the present have been only abroad. Therefore there is movement and in factories everywhere much work. They built a new railway to Wilanów, another is being built to Grójec, many nice small parks are added, before the All-Saints Church and the St. Alexander Church. Where the Ujazdowski place was there is now a very beautiful park. On Krakowskie Przedmieście will stand a monument of Mickiewicz; there will be a consecration on Christmas eve, an enormous meeting; all the windows are already hired. Only you won't be here! And perhaps you will still come back to Warsaw some day? May God grant it.[1] All my brothers came here, some

[1] By the description of Warsaw she evidently wishes to attract him home. At the same time we have a manifestation of attachment to the city.

be angry with me for writing to you so decidedly, but I have almost nobody except you. Although I have many relatives it is as if I had none, for you remember also what you got from your relatives when you were in need. Although you were only a child. . . . .

And now I bid you goodbye, dear husband. Be healthy, and don't forget me.

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

557 May 24, 1898

DEAR WŁADEK: I received your letter on May 1, i.e., 15 roubles of money. They had searched for me for some weeks and could not find me, because you almost never address to Jan Sliwiński, but to Teofila Borkowska. I should not have received this money . . . . only Sliwińska wondered why you had not written for almost a year. She found the postman and asked him whether he had never had a letter from America to Borkowska, and he said that he had one some weeks ago, but could not find [the person] and gave it back to the post-office. There were two money-orders, one of 15 roubles for Teofila Borkowska, and the other of 25 roubles for Teofila Bartowska [misaddressed]. They refused to give me the second, saying that it was not for me, and kept it at the office. And as you sent no letter, I don't know myself whether these 25 roubles are for me or not. So I beg you, dear Władek, answer me the soonest possible whether you sent me these 25 roubles, and if you did, you must correct the name yourself. . . . . Perhaps I suspect you, dear husband, and grieve that you have forgotten me, while it is perhaps unjust. You have written perhaps, but not to the address of the Sliwińskis, but to mine, and the letter did not reach me. I thank you, dear Władek, for your remembrance and for these 15 roubles with which you have saved me from a great misery. May our Lord God in reward help you in all

---

would fall at once to the lowest degree in the social scale—to that of a *wyrobnik*, having no home and working by the day. Therefore they defend themselves to the last against plain physical work, and often prefer pauperism. The class of city paupers recruits itself mainly, if not exclusively, from these people. The peasant, particularly the farmer, despises heartily this class of people, even if envying sometimes their few external refinements of dress and manners. But this class of people, by real culture hardly superior to the country peasant, forgets every prepossession and works as hard as possible when in America.

560 June 26, 1901

DEAR WŁADEK: I received the letter with 50 roubles, which you sent on January 25. Later, after many troubles and much walking, at the cost of 10 roubles, I got the pictures, for which I thank you heartily, first for the money, then for the picture. For you not only remember about my needs, but you caused me a great pleasure. But for the picture only I thank you, for Karol [brother] and Lodzia [niece] are not satisfied at all, they would prefer a score or two of roubles.[1] Dear Władek, I have not written for so long a time, for, to tell the truth, I don't dare to importune you so often. But you authorized me yourself, for you wrote me to write you whenever I needed money. So, dear Władek, I write now———.

I don't live any longer with Karol and his wife, for it seemed to them that since I lived with them they ought to have a living out of me. But as I could not give them everything you sent me they began to behave toward me in an awful manner, so that at last they wanted to beat me. So I live now elsewhere. . . . .

O, dear Władek, if it could happen some day, if you could come and take me with you! For myself I would not be able to go alone to you. And perhaps somebody from your side [of your family or friends] will go to America? Then I would willingly go with him to you. . . . .

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

561 July 29, 1902

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter . . . . and it grieved me much that you had been so very sick. Well, but thanks to God you are now in good health, and I wish you the same in the future; I pray our Lord God for it every day. [Describes the difficulty she had in getting 60 roubles which he sent her.] Stanisław intends to go to you within a short time. He promised me always that when he went he would take me with him. I rejoiced very much, but they

[1] Again she tries, consciously or half-consciously, to weaken still more the connection between her husband and his family, in order to have him exclusively for herself. This method does not seem very wise, if we compare this situation with the peasant series. Since the personal relation between husband and wife is not strong enough, the proper thing would be to strengthen as much as possible all the ties which attach him to his country.

of them to Warsaw, to work at the railway-works, others in Wola, others in Brudno. . . . . The Borkowskis are no longer here. They rented a buffet at a railway-station. [Indifferent news about friends.]

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

559 May 12, 1899

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter . . . . with 20 roubles and three photographs on April 4, for which I send you a hearty "God reward." I bear it always in my heart and thought and I always repeat it to everybody, that you were good and generous and you are so up to the present. I can be proud before everybody that you don't forget me[1] for which once more may our Lord God reward you. I beg only our Lord God that we may yet see each other once more. Write me, dear Władek, can I hope it? When I saw you in a cyclist dress in the photograph, I could hardly recognize you, you have got about 10 years younger, particularly because you had your beard shaved. But did you not regret your beard? Kawecki thanks you much for the photograph and will send you his own soon, together with his wife's. They even wish to give you a surprise and to send you a group of all [the members] of the fraternity [a half-religious fraternity to which he belonged; see Kawecki letters]. And as to me, if God comforts me still on your behalf [if you still send me money], I will send you also my photograph. Don't be angry, dear Władek, for my counting upon you alone. Perhaps now your condition is still difficult, but I beg our Lord God in every prayer that He may help you in all your intentions, and I always feel a comfort and hope, that you are very happy and in a very good condition.[2] . . . . And I think that if our Lord God helps you, for me it will also be better. . . . .

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

[1] We see how her social standing depends exclusively upon her husband's good will toward her. She does not succeed in getting position personally, hardly even tries, but clings desperately to the only thread which keeps her from falling definitely into the class of paupers and outcasts.

[2] We find here a proof that praying to God for the sake of anyone is not a merely formal expression of gratitude, but that the prayer, as well as the blessing, is supposed to be really efficient and a real reward for a benefit received. The existence of beggars is based upon this idea. Cf. Wróblewski series, No. 31, note.

563 April 23, 1904

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter with 60 roubles. . . . . It rejoiced me on the one hand, but on the other hand grieved me very much. Believe me, dear Władek, that I had such a foreboding. When I divided the [Easter] egg with anybody, I wept, for I imagined always that you are so far away, alone, without family, and more than once you must feel very sad, as I do, and perhaps even sick, and there is nobody to care for you of your own people. And so it seemed to me continually, and suddenly Sliwińska brings me a letter. Really, my foreboding proved true. Believe me, dear Władek, that I even was not so glad to receive this money as grieved in learning that you are sick. You are often sick there, probably the climate is bad for you. But I pray and beg our Lord God every day to give you health and to make you still happy in your life. You are still young, and up to the present you have not yet experienced any good in your life. So may our Lord God give you every good, whatever you wish from Him, for your good heart.[1] God reward you for the money which you sent me! Besides you, I had still another sorrow, for my brother Ignacy is dead. . . . . I don't know even whether you remember him. So people of my family begin to die. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

564 August 8, 1904

DEAR HUSBAND: For God's sake answer, what is going on with you. This is the fourth letter which I send you, begging you for an answer, and you don't answer me even a word. I believe, dear husband, that perhaps you are tired already with writing always and sending money. But perhaps our Lord God will make you free soon. I wish it myself, for I am also tired with worrying myself so in this world and worrying you besides. Although you do not let me feel it, because you are good, yet I feel it myself, and whenever I receive money from you I weep, for I am a burden to you and I can repay you with nothing except by praying God for your health and for happiness in your life. . . . .[2]

Your sincerely loving wife,

Good by.

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

[1] This is apparently a resignation to the idea of a perpetual separation and perhaps to the possibility of his being happy with another woman.

[2] Her conviction is more outspoken than in the preceding letter. A few words from time to time and a little money to enable her to continue to live is all she can claim.

wanted to wheedle me out of the money which you had sent me. And as I could not give it to them they don't speak to me any more. I don't know whether it is possible, but when he goes to America, he wants to marry there his sweetheart with whom he lives and has 5 children. So, dear husband, if it is possible, when he takes her, perhaps I could go with them to you. I desire it very much, even only to see you, my dear! If it is possible, write to him yourself, for he is like a wasp to me now because of my not having given them this money.[1] I thank you once more heartily for the money and I beg you, my dear, although with a great timidity, don't forget about me and send me soon a little at least, for it is already difficult for me to earn anything. They require now machine-sewing. Moreover my eyes ache from crying and from work in these small corners, in the kitchen where I live, because for 3 roubles nobody would receive me into a dwelling-room. And even these 3 roubles I can scarcely pay, and often I suffer hunger, since the rent must be paid. . . . .

Your always loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

562 March 27, 1903

DEAR HUSBAND: Mr. Rupiński called upon me on March 11, and left me 40 roubles, for which may our Lord God reward you. I wanted to answer you at once but I had yet to see Mr. R. before his departure. Meanwhile he probably had some business and could not see me, for during a whole week I went every day to the Karols to see him, for they always told me that he was not yet leaving. . . . . And perhaps they simply deceived me, for they have a pleasure in annoying me in any way. Now, dear Władek, Mr. R. said that you would probably come back to Warsaw. O, dear Władek, a new life entered into me, the whole world appeared to me more gay. Now I shall pray to our Lord God to shorten these months, for you won't believe how happy I am now. I shall live with this idea, that I may see you yet before dying. Now, dear Władek, I will try to find the man who bought the altar, for he said that if we want it he will give it back at any moment. Dear husband, perhaps you will send me an authorization to get back from Stanisław the rest of the money which he owes you. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

[1] Compare this whole story with the letters of Stanisław R.

postman who gave her a letter and a money-order for 70 roubles. She brought me at once this comfort to the hospital. Believe me, Władek, when I read your letter, that perhaps I may see you still, it seemed to me that I was healthier. But even so I remained still about a month in the hospital, and when I left it I had money to live and to pay for the lodging, because Sliwińska brought me 75 roubles from the post-office. . . . . So think, dear Władek, is it not a true Providence, Divine and yours, which guards me?

Perhaps you won't come here for ever, dear Władek, but at least perhaps you will visit Warsaw and your friends, and so God will listen to me and I shall see you once more. . . . .[1]

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

568 March 1, 1907

DEAR HUSBAND: Again some months have passed and I have no news from you. As long as you were in Chicago it seemed as if I felt you nearer, but now [when you are in California] it seems to me that you are so far that even by thought I cannot reach you. O, my dear Władek, you cannot imagine how woeful it is to live so alone, a woman left by everybody in the world. For if a woman is poor she has no friends at all, even her family leaves her. I see nobody but Sliwińska from time to time, and nobody else ever comes to me. So, my dear Władek, although you are so far, don't forget me, for if you forgot me my life would be ended for me. Answer me soon, my only one!

Good by, my dear husband.

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

569 September 2, 1909

DEAR HUSBAND: For God's sake, what has happened? Since you wrote last year and sent money in June . . . . you sent money the second time in December, but no letter. I wrote two letters to you, begging you to write a few words, at least upon a postcard, but you did not write, I don't know why. . . . . You know probably already that [Mr.] Sliwiński is dead, for I wrote you, and even your friend, Mr. Kotowski, told me that he wrote you. I don't see Mr. K. now, for he lives in Praga and I hear intends to go back to America. Mr. K. told me that you would write a letter for me to the address of

[1] Complete resignation, placing herself on the same basis as his friends.

565 October 16, 1905

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . I wrote you a letter on August 10, asking . . . you to answer with at least a few words, whether you are in good health and whether you received my letter with thanks for the money. But up to the present I have no answer. It is true, dear Władek, that you have not so much time, but, my dear, write me sometimes a few words; you will cause me a great comfort. For I read your letter like a prayer, because for me, dear Władek, our Lord God is the first and you the second. Don't be angry, if perhaps I bore you with my letters, but it is for me a great comfort to be able to speak with you at least through this paper. Write me, Władek, whether you will come some day to Warsaw. Good by. May our Lord God keep you in His care.

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

566 February 12, 1906

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . Don't be angry with me for writing to you in such an importunate way and asking always for money, but what can I do, poor woman, when I have no other way except to stretch out my hand on the street and beg. It is quite difficult for me to earn enough for my whole living, because not everybody wants [clothes] sewn by hand but only some poor servant maid, who pays then very little. So, my dear husband, send me what you can, for I have nothing to live on. I even made debts for my rent and a few roubles which I borrowed from Sliwińska on account of the money which you will send me. . . . . I wrote you some letters begging you so much to answer me a few words, whether you are in good health, but you wrote me no letter except that one with money. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

567 November 25, 1906

DEAR HUSBAND: First, may God the Great reward you for your good heart and your care for me, for truly it is nothing else but the Divine Providence which through your person guards me. I had not a whole rouble left, and moreover I got so sick that I was taken unconscious to the hospital; nobody even among my acquaintances knew it. Only when I came back a little to health I asked the nun to telephone to Sliwińska, and the latter when coming to me met the

571 August 6, 1910

DEAR HUSBAND: I write to you with great timidity, but despair obliges me to write so openly. I beg you, dear Władek, I beg you for God's sake, have pity and send me a little money, for I can find no way out. I tried to get from the Philanthropic Association at least a few tickets for a few pounds of bread and a few pints of gruel monthly, but they refused me, for they learned that I have a husband. They say that it is for them all the same whether this husband is in Warsaw or in America, but I have a husband. So I don't know what to do with myself. I have no work, for now even a poor servant maid wants [her dresses] to be sewn on a machine with different adornments, for such is the fashion. And, to tell the truth, I begin to lose my eyes with sewing and crying. So I only implore first our Lord God, then you for mercy upon me. Have pity, dear husband, send me [money] as soon as possible, because I owe for rent, I owe to Sliwińska, and I have no possibility of paying them, while every day I must nourish myself, and I have nothing. Although I economize every grosz from you and nourish myself with anything in order only to live through the day, yet everything is so expensive, particularly rent. I live in a basement, my bed in a corner, a box and a small table before the bed, and I pay for it 3 roubles and 2 złoty [3 roubles, 30] a month, and they hardly permit me sometimes to cook a little with my own fuel, and so it is everywhere. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

Dear husband, write me whether you will come some day to Warsaw? It is true that you have put aside some money, but on the other hand you are far away from your family and from your land. And after so many years you would have had better conditions even here, and more than one pain would be spared to you. For it seems to me that sometimes it is not very pleasant for you there, and more than once perhaps you long for your people. Write me, dear Władek; let me at least have some illusion that I shall still see you.

572 October 13, 1910

DEAR HUSBAND: A few weeks ago I sent you a letter, or rather a supplication, asking you to have pity and to send me some money. But you, Władek, did not answer me a word. I don't know what to

his brother on Hoża Street, so I go there very often and ask, but there is never any letter. So, dear Władek, don't be angry for my registering this letter, but from sorrow I don't know what to do. Dear husband, if you send money, send it as before to the address of Mrs. Sliwińska. . . . . And I beg you, dear husband, don't be angry, but I beg you, send as soon as possible, what you can. Dear Władek, I know that you are worth some thousands, for Mr. K. told me so. You could therefore do to yourself and to me and to all your friends this pleasure, and come at least on a visit to Warsaw. Now in Warsaw it is very quiet.

Good by, dear husband, and may God give you everything the best.

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

570 January 20, 1910

DEAR HUSBAND, MY BELOVED WŁADEK: I don't know why you do not want to write to me. Evidently you don't want to, for I have sent you 4 letters and begged and implored you to write at least a few words, but you don't write at all. Never yet, during so many years, has it been so. Now, toward the end of my life, for a year and 8 months you have not written a letter. Why, you could find a little time to write a few words! You sent money a year and two months ago and even then you did not write a word. Evidently you don't wish to care for me any more. And what can I do now, unhappy woman, since I cannot earn enough for my living. Here thousands of young people walk without work, and for me, in my advanced age, it is still more difficult. So I don't know what I shall do with myself, miserable woman, if you cease to care for me and don't send me money any more. Nothing more is left for me except to stretch out my hand and beg on the street, or to take my life away. But I, miserable woman, have not courage enough to do either the one or the other, only I worry and suffer hunger, for I lack a bit of bread. So have pity, dear husband! You have cared for me so many years, don't abandon me in the last years of my life. Send me a little money, and perhaps our Lord God will listen to my prayer—and increase your fortune, your happiness, and your health. . . . .[1]

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

[1] An unimportant letter follows from which it is evident that he sent her some money before this letter reached him.

and send me a little money, for strange things come already to my head, and I tell you openly that it is from hunger. For a long time I have not had a penny of my own, only a few roubles of debt which I borrow, a few złoty at once. But as it seems to other people that you won't send me any more, so I don't dare to borrow, and they make excuses and don't want to lend me. So I beg you, send as soon as possible, or else I will probably take my life away. On Easter I should not have had a bit of dry bread if Śliwińska had not given me, and she also has nothing, lives only by the mercy of her children. . . . .[1]

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

576 September 8, 1911

DEAR HUSBAND: Don't be angry with me, dear Władek, for writing to you too often, but I am always tormented [about you] and I grieve, fearing you may be sick. For the papers write here that in America great heats prevailed and therefore many people are sick; perhaps even therefore I grieve so and have such painful dreams. So, dear Władek, answer me at least a few words, comfort me in my heavy misfortune, for you are my only Providence. . . . . Only you are changed since some time, dear Władek; when you write, your letter is now always angry with me. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

577 July 12, 1912

DEAR HUSBAND: Have pity upon me, for I am already barefooted and naked. They have taken everything for the rent, even the pillow from under my head; only a small pillow is left. Have pity, dear Władek, and send me some money! You won't let me die from hunger, for I know that you have a merciful and noble heart, only perhaps somebody incites you. Why, I have not much longer to live, for with such a hunger as I suffer now I shall not hold out long. So I implore you, dear husband, have pity and listen to my imploring, for you are the second after God, to whom I pray every day.

Good by, dear husband. Be happy.

Your loving wife,

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

[1] The next letter, here omitted, shows that he sent her some money.

think. I think that you are tired perhaps with having cared for me for so long a time. But have pity and send me something and don't forget me. Perhaps soon things will come to an end with me and I shall go aside from your way. Write me, dear Władek, what is the news with you. Perhaps you are sick and therefore don't answer. Answer, my beloved, my dear benefactor, and send me some money. . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

573 November 11, 1910

DEAR HUSBAND: You write that I have not answered after receiving your money. But I sent you at once a letter with thanks when I received 75 roubles from the post-office. . . . . You sent this money a year ago, in November, while I received it only in February 1910. . . . . Of the money which you have sent me not a penny was ever lost. If we see each other some day—and I pray always to our Lord God for it, and I hope that it will come—I shall show you all your letters and orders, for I keep them like holy things. . . . . Dear Władek, you make reproaches for my calling on you for money. Look through the letters [you will see] that I beg you and implore you with great timidity, and only because great need forces me. Dear Władek, you won't believe how I beg our Lord God that I may see you still before my death. My dear, write me whether it will ever happen. And write me, my dear, whether you know there everything, which happened here upon Jasna Góra [Częstochowa; a monk killed his cousin and robbed the cloister].

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

574 December 18, 1910

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter and 38 roubles. [Details and thanks.]

Dear Władek, are you angry when I write you and ask you to write me a few words, whether you will ever come to Warsaw? For you never answer my begging. Answer at least a few words to my begging, my dear! . . . .

TEOFILA BORKOWSKA

575 April 20, 1911

DEAR HUSBAND: I wrote you four letters and in every one I implored you to write me at least a few words, and I cannot prevail upon you. So, my dear husband, have pity upon me, I implore you,

As to our singing, all those are there who were there during your presence. We have not learned any new song except this one which we send you. I, my children, and all our brothers and sisters from the choir of the Holy Rosary, are in good health, by the favor of our Lord God, and we wish you the same with our soul and heart. We send up a profound and sincere sigh to the Great Lord of Hosts, that He may bless you in that far and remote country. I send you my photograph and that of the priest S., for remembrance. All your acquaintances greet you, such as [enumeration].

And now, Resp. Mr. Borkowski . . . . nothing remains, except to kiss you, my kindest friend, heartily. I greet you and bid you goodbye in the name of the Holy Trinity, from whose care may you never be removed. And I exhort you to worship this Holy Trinity ceaselessly, and be sure that you won't be deceived. And acting thus, we can secure for ourselves our soul's salvation. I wish it to you, my kindest friend and brother in Christ, and to myself with all my heart.[1]

P. Kawecki

580 November 24, 1896

Respected Mr. Władysław Borkowski: I received your photograph, for which I send you most hearty thanks. I took it to the church and showed it to all your friends, who were very much satisfied, and particularly myself, for it is made very originally. I married Mrs. Józefa P. last year, and now God has given us a third daughter [two from the first marriage]. We are in good health, by the favor of our Lord God, and we wish you the same. Here in Warsaw everything is the same, except [news about priests who died or were transferred]. As to the Rosary-choir, nobody among the priests cares for us, only I teach [the members] to sing, as best I can. From our Rosary-circle died [enumeration]. Your wife longs very much for you, she would like to see you as soon as possible. From this grief

[1] The religious fraternities to one of which the writer and Borkowski belonged are very old in Warsaw. They have developed an artificial kind of devotion and a religious jargon of which the first letter of Kawecki is a good example. Outside of the traditional atmosphere of these circles, this way of addressing a friend by a man would be hardly possible in Poland, except perhaps on some very important occasions, in great sorrow, etc. The religiosity is, moreover, hardly connected with a higher morality; Kawecki himself becomes later a habitual drunkard. On the fraternities in general, cf. Osiński series, No. 78, note.

578 September 5, 1912

RESPECTED SIR: Your wife is sick, she lies in the St. Roch's Hospital . . . . since August 20. She received the money which you sent, 20 roubles, in August; she was already so sick that she scarcely dragged herself to the post-office. . . . . She is not so dangerously sick, but suffering very much . . . . and in general the whole organism is very weak because of bad nutrition and continuous sorrow. She is so alone and deserted almost by everybody, for the family never comes to see her. Even to the hospital nobody goes except me, who go to her once in a week. Even the Czs. do nòt, although I informed them. In the hospital she has at least some care, while at home she remained quite alone, for the people with whom she lived left for some weeks. The doctor advised sending her to the hospital that she might have at least a little comfort and care. So please write to her at once. You will thus comfort her a little, for she longs continually for you and your letters. I shall answer you at once, how she is in her health. And please be so good and send her a few roubles when she leaves the hospital, for of those 20 roubles only a few złoty are left, and she must pay the rent for the time during which she remains in the hospital. And please, be so kind, send her [money] regularly every month or every 2 months, for your wife is horribly tormented by this lack of a few złoty and of a letter from you, when you don't write for so long a time. And please, write a little more affectionately. Only do it soon, for it will be the best medicine for your wife, at least for her heart. . . . .

ALEKSANDRA SLIWIŃSKA

579 September 27, 1893

"Praised be Jesus Christus."

RESPECTED MR. BORKOWSKI: I have received your letter, for which I send you the most hearty "God reward." I was very glad that you deigned to describe the customs of that country and that you are in good health, for which infinite praise be to God who deigns to keep you in His omnipotent guardianship on your long journey. And now, Resp. Sir, in Warsaw there is no news. Food has got cheaper, except sugar and meat. For instance, 2 lbs. of bread cost now 6 copecks, a korzec [250 lbs.] of potatoes 1 rouble, and so on.

to give anybody your address.. Only I beg you, don't make any reproaches to your wife in your letters.[1]

Now, dear Władzio, I inform you about my success. I work now in my own shop, and there was a time when 10 journeymen worked with me and I had 1,500 roubles in cash. Counting upon my cash, I took a larger shop, and I lost everything in a year. I have still all my tools, but have that cash no longer, and only 2 journeymen and a boy work with me. So my condition is not very good, and if I knew that there was something good for me in America and if you gave me information in a letter, I would leave Warsaw, for in Warsaw it is more and more difficult to live. Although I became a master and belong to the guild, it is very difficult to get on. I have had losses because of the strike of last year, and the rent is expensive, while I heard from your wife that God has blessed you and you succeed well. May God grant it to you. I wish it, for when you left, it seemed to me as if my brother or father were dead. . . . .

Your true companion,

STANISLAW R.

[1] The situation disclosed in these letters is rather difficult to understand. There is an evident antagonism of interests between Stanisław R. and Teofila B., both of whom rely on Władysław B. in matters of money. Still, for a long time, their relations remain friendly, until apparently they are broken almost entirely. The simplest explanation seems to be the following one. Teofila is jealous of Stanisław, for the social reason stated in the introduction, and for the economic reason, that he wants her husband to lend him money. Yet her hostile feeling is for a long time neutralized by the fact that in Stanisław's home she is relatively well treated and often fed—which in her loneliness and poverty mean much—and that she hopes to go to America under Stanisław's care. This second reason remains even after the breaking of the relation (see her letter No. 561), and therefore the break is not definite. As to Stanisław, it is probable that he may have miscalculated the power of the connection between Teofila and her husband and hoped to influence him through her until he understood that Władysław B. considered his wife rather a burden, and then he lost his interest in her. At any rate, his way of writing about her in the first letters and in the last one seems to express precisely such an evolution. The break, thus prepared, may have been caused really by Teofila's refusal to lend Stanisław money. Nevertheless, it is possible that there was also a feeling of pity, finally tired out by Teofila's continual complaints.

Besides this situation with regard to Teofila, and his own matrimonial relations, the letters of Stanisław are totally insignificant. They show a personality as average and uninteresting as possible, and in this respect precisely typical of his class, which has lost the mediaeval town traditions, has no peasant traditions, remains still untouched by the influence of modern industrialism, and particularly in Warsaw, lacks the ambitious tendencies going along with the constitution of a new social organization.

she was very sick, and was obliged to go to the hospital, but now she is already in good health, and implores you for pity's sake to come back to Warsaw ["and implores . . . ." added later]. And now . . . . I commend your person to the Providence of God. May He guard you against any bad accidents and grant you the best health and every good. [Christmas wishes and greetings from friends.]

P. KAWECKI

581 November 25, 1894

"Praised be" [etc.].

DEAR FRIEND: [News about the death of the tsar Alexander III, description of the funeral-ceremonies, etc.; news about friends.] In the iron-factories and on the railways there is enormous work. In Sosnowiec lives one of your friends, I forget his name. He says always that you should come, that there is a sure place for you on the railway. So come back to Warsaw now. Because of his ascending the throne the emperor has reduced the punishment of prisoners and offenders, so there will be amnesty for you. And you will revive your wife again from this sorrow, for she torments herself continually. That which you lost you will earn again with the help of our Lord God. And as to the shame, throw it away from you and let it be ended. For people do worse things and they come off easily.[1] So I am persuaded that you will come back soon, and I beg you to answer whether you will come back. And I assure you with all my heart that you won't be deceived at all. . . . .

Your loving and sincere friend,

EMILIAN L.

582 October 28, 1900

DEAR WŁADYSŁAW BORKOWSKI: Praised be God. You praise God and I praise him also. But you did not keep the word which you gave me and you did not write me where you are to be found. Only after much begging I received your address [from your wife], and there must be some jealousy, for your wife begged me very much not

[1] We do not know his offense. Possibly some small peculation.

Perhaps I have offended you in some way in my letters and therefore you don't answer me. Pardon me, for I have loved you much because of your devotion. . . . .

Your wife comes every day to me and asks whether you have not given any news about yourself. She wonders whether perhaps somebody has written some false letters to you [slandering her] and therefore you remember her so little. For it is difficult for her to live. She says with great crying that now, were it not for the sea, she would go afoot to you. So she begs you also to send her a ship-ticket. . . . .

STANISŁAW R.

585 May 30, 1902

DEAR COMPANION WŁADYSŁAW: I received your letter on May 29, and I rejoiced much at your good advice. I am therefore selling my whole business and waiting for your answer and the ship-ticket which you promised me, for I believe that it will be cheaper. Dear Władzio, could you not send a ticket for me and for my oldest son, 15 years old, for he would perhaps become a loafer during this year of my absence. And if you think that it is difficult, so I beg you to send a ticket for me alone. I will take more money with me than 50 roubles [required from every immigrant]. I should like to work together with you as long as I still have some health, by the favor of God. . . . . Your wife received the money, 60 roubles and 1 copeck. Now I inform you that in Warsaw handworkers are very badly situated. When I see you, I will tell you everything. So, dear companion, send me a ship-ticket. I should prefer a more expensive one, for I should not like to go so long through the water. With your advice and help, God will help me also. . . . .

STANISŁAW R.

586 February 8, 1903

DEAR COMPANION WŁADYSŁAW: . . . . I received your ship-ticket last year . . . . and I am not sure whether it will be valid for this year. I asked and was informed that it was valid but I don't know whether you did not withdraw it, so I beg you, inform me about it. This year I am going to see you and to greet you like a brother and companion. Poland is a country which gets poorer and poorer. Now I inform you why I could not go last year. I counted that I

583 April 6, 1902

DEAR COMPANION: . . . . My work is very bad. You wrote me to come, and then I had still some money, but now I have none. But I would go to you at once if you sent me a ship-ticket. Only I have now a large family, another wife [illegal] who is worthy of respect. So we are two, and 5 children, the oldest 15, the youngest 2 years old. At the same time your wife assures me that if I go she will go with me, but with nobody else. Reflect whether you may help me, for I should risk everything. Warsaw is building up rapidly, but among the middle [really lower] class the misery is awful. If I sell my tools I can get about 400 roubles. Now, dear companion, your wife suffers terribly without money, for she cannot earn much. The money which you sent is spent long ago, and it is very difficult for her to earn. She wrote to you long ago for some help, for she has nothing to live on and to pay the rent. This letter is written in the presence of your wife. [News about friends.] P. Kawecki is in the customs-office, as formerly. He drinks very much. . . . .

Your truly well-wishing,

STANISŁAW R.

584 May 14, 1902

DEAR COMPANION WŁADYSŁAW: . . . . I don't know what is going on with you, why do you not give any news about yourself. This is the 4th letter which I send you and have no answer. . . . . In my last letter I asked you for a ship-ticket for myself and your wife, for your wife has absolutely nothing to live on and to pay for her lodging. Those 50 roubles which you sent so long ago are spent, for more than a year has passed since you sent them. . . . . So I don't know whether you don't receive my letters or don't wish to answer your countryman from Warsaw, a Pole and a companion. Dear Władysław, my companion, perhaps you have read in my letters that I want to go to you at any moment, for in Warsaw, even if I worked my hands away, I could earn only for my living and some clothes, while it does not suffice for the schooling of my children. Many people here in Warsaw walk without work. . . . . As to my character and my disposition, you know well that I have never cheated anybody for a grosz. In the same way I would give you back with thanks the money for the ship-ticket.

PORZYCKI SERIES

The Porzyckis are another isolated marriage-group whose relation with the family-group of both husband and wife is rather loose, though some assistance is given and received. As in the case of the Borkowskis, there is a notable poverty of traditional materials, but the Porzyckis have preserved somewhat more of the traditional attitudes, because, living in a small town, they are more subject to the pressure of social opinion. The social opinion itself is, however, rather hesitating; even in small towns the traditional standpoint has been abandoned in most of its details. Moreover, it was never very consistent, since the traditions of the city class were always intermingled with those of the peasants. Perhaps the Porzyckis are also of peasant origin; the preceding generation may have moved to the town and there lost all the peasant attitudes which differed from those prevailing in the town without acquiring the traditions of their new environment.

The cultural level is not much higher than in the Borkowski case. Porzycki is a shoemaker, the woman a midwife, and these professions in small towns do not require much instruction. It seems that there is a little more community of interests between the Porzyckis than between the Borkowskis; at least there is a little more real affection. But this would be hardly enough to keep the conjugal connection strong in spite of the separation if there were no other factors.

Finally, the characters are almost alike in both cases. Porzycki, as well as Borkowski, is rather cold; his wife, by her lack of energy and independence, is hardly more able than Borkowska to defend her own cause either in her

should finish in time a work for which 275 roubles were due to me, but the bronze-maker did not make the bronzes [for furniture] in time. Moreover, I had an apprentice-boy, for whose learning the parents had paid. So all this hindered my going. Dear companion, answer me what happened with that ship-ticket? I regret having wasted this year in Warsaw. If my ship-ticket is valid this year it would be a great help to me, because I would take my wife and children; I should have money enough. Then we would live merrily, for my wife loves me too much and does not want to let me go alone. Dear Władzio, help me in whatever you think it advisable. Jan K. came here from America and told me that it was the best to go together with one's wife, that there such good housewives are lacking, because the women don't want to work. Now, dear companion, I have very good children, who would love you much. Jan K. said that a woman who wants to work and cooks or bakes well gets on pretty well. And I can boast that I have a wife who is good in this work, and laborious, and affectionate in the case—God forbid!—of a sickness. With my children you would have a distraction, for everybody envies me because of them, they are so pretty and attached.

And now, dear companion, I should like to inform you about your wife, but I don't know what is going on with her, for she does not call upon us any more. Last year she came almost every day. I don't say it as a reproach [boast], but I always asked her to share our dinner and invited her to stay over the supper. I don't know why [she does not come], perhaps because she is angry with me for your having sent me the ship-ticket, for I heard so. I write you the truth. I inform you only that I don't know where she lives now, for Klimek's wife [with whom she lived] told me that nobody wants to lodge her, because she is awfully boresome, and already gray-headed like a mushroom [usual comparison].

STANISŁAW R.

she has a profession, keep the social standing of Porzycka from ever falling even approximately so low as that of Borkowska. Certainly her social standing still depends upon her husband's success and his fidelity to her, but not absolutely, as in the preceding case.

The Porzyckis are thus an example of a relatively solidary family-group of the modern type, in which the solidarity does not result alone from tradition and pressure of social opinion, but from relations between individuals as determined by mere natural bonds. However, the group is neither perfectly solidary nor very harmonious. Common interests have to fight against individual interests, and there are frequent misunderstandings and quarrels. In comparing this case with the peasant families, we see what a powerful factor of harmony is the traditional familial organization.

587–629, TO STANISŁAW PORZYCKI, IN AMERICA, FROM HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN, IN POLAND. THE LAST LETTER IS HIS REPLY TO A REQUEST FOR FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT HIS FAMILY

587 [MŁAWA, autumn, 1910]

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that we are all in good health, thanks to our Lord God. . . . . Don't believe in those dreams, for they only deceive everybody. . . . . Mother must always cry, sometimes even be sick, for when Hela merits a punishment and mother beats her, grandmother at once takes her part, and they both gossip [outside] about mother. This [contemptible] Hela now goes to the teaching in the church,[1] and instead of being better she is still worse. Please, father, advise us, at least in a letter, what to do with this Hela, for mother can no longer hold out with her. . . . .[2]

ROMUALD [ROMEK] P.

[1] Instruction before confession.

[2] It is the familial duty of the son to take the part of the mother against the daughter, but in the whole series the attachment of the son to the mother and of the daughter to the father is so marked as to suggest the Freudian theory. Perhaps the attitude of protector of the family assumed by the boy in the absence of the father is here, as in many of the following letters, merely an objective and conscious form in which the subconscious preference for the mother finds its expression.

relation with her husband or with her social environment. And, moreover, she is a neuraesthenic. In short, it seems that the history of this marriage-group should be a repetition of that of the Borkowskis, and of many others from among the lower city class. But it is not so, owing to the children. The children are, first of all, objects of common care, and thus the sphere of interest of husband and wife remains partly the same in spite of their separaton. Further, the common obligation toward the children forces the parents to keep their obligations toward each other. Consequently, the situation of the wife is quite different from that in the Borkowski case. She is not an isolated and passive individual toward whom any attitude is possible from the husband, but an active member of a larger group to which her husband belongs; she performs a function which nobody else could perform, and her husband must be interested in her, if not personally, at least as in a member of the marriage-group. The children themselves grow into active members of the marriage-group and exert a conscious influence on their parents. See particularly the letters of Romek.

With regard to the social environment, the situation of the woman is here also quite different from that in the preceding case. We see that she has sometimes economic difficulties, but there is not a single complaint about any humiliation. The woman is and will always be treated by the environment with some consideration as a member and provisional head of the small group, even if her personality should not command respect. Sympathy with the children, expectation that the children will grow up and possibly become important members of the community, certainty that the husband, even if absent, will never completely break the relation of solidarity, because the ties which unite him with the rest of the marriage-group are too strong—all these considerations, to which may be added the fact that

ribly empty here, and I long so much for you, dear husband! The longing and grief devour me slowly. If you knew, dearest, what were our holidays! Perhaps yours were also not merrier, but you are a man and you can bear your lot with more resignation. Can I do it? Oh no, it is difficult to bear this; the wheelbarrow of life is too heavy for my shoulders. So, dear husband, if you wish to lighten our misfortune, take me there, where you are, and perhaps when we are together this weight of life won't seem so heavy to us. For if you don't take us, know it, my dear, that I can still get money for my own journey. I will leave the children and go after you. Otherwise I shall perish, waste away here. Why, Stach dear, you went away with the idea that we should come at once after you, and you don't even mention it but I must be the first [to speak of it]. Klasztor took his wife 9 weeks ago, Mania Pawłowska is going away presently. Only for me there is no place!

Dear Stach, if I found work at least! But I happen to get work as often as a blind hen finds grains [proverb]. And here we lack money, and you say yourself that the children ought not to suffer cold. My dear husband, if I could, if I had [money], surely not only the children but myself would be dressed, for you know that I like it. But when there is no money! Do you know, dear Stach, that since you went away I have not bought anything for myself except shoes, for I cannot walk barefooted. But all this would not be so painful to me if we could be together. So if you love me, arrange for us to be together! Well, dear husband, you won't say now that I write little, will you? Though all these are not merry things, still don't grieve, dearest, for I should not like you to be grieved through me. I should like us to be always merry, always happy, and our letters to be not so sad. But, say, should I lie? You prefer the reality yourself, even if it were the saddest. And then, to whom shall I go, if not to you? To whom shall I complain, if not to you? And when I know that you share my feelings and sympathize with me—oh, then my heart is much lighter. Pardon me, dear Stach, for sending you so much sad news, but all this because I want to be *with you.* What more shall I write you? Only that our children are healthy, thanks to God, and learn well enough. I have nothing more to write. I think it is enough, is it not?

This letter took me very much time, but it is not time that I lack. I received your money for Christmas only after New Year. I send

588 November 3 [1910]

DEAR HUSBAND: In the first words of my letter, "Praised be Jesus Christus. . . . ."[1]

I received the money, 50 roubles, for which I thank you heartily, for I was almost in despair. During the whole of October I earned nothing, and there were always expenses. Were it not for the Rząps, who lent us a few roubles, I don't know how we should have lived. Thanks to God that at least they are our friends, for it would be hard. . . . . These 50 roubles which you sent will be spent at once—15 roubles to Pawłowska, 10 to the Rząps . . . . shoes for us all, a few wagons of turf, potatoes. Believe me, my dear, I should prefer to have you rather than this money, for I had not so much trouble when you were here. Now you write that you won't come back until you pay your debt. But it will soon be a year and there is almost nothing paid of it. . . . . I inform you about Romek, that he is getting awfully spoiled; he does not listen at all, he is worse and worse. Please send him an admonition, but so as if you wrote of yourself, for he does not even want to go to church.[2] Pawłowski writes to his family that he will come back, will sell his property and will take them all to America, for it is so well there. I have nothing more to write, only I wish you, dearest love, good health and success, and may the Lord God help you to pay that debt back.

Your loving wife and children,

WŁADYSŁAWA PORZYCKA

Only, I beg you, write more often.

589 January 7, 1911

And although we cannot be together, yet we can be united in our hearts and thoughts [probably quotation from his letter]. It is true, dear husband, that we are united in our hearts and thoughts, but tell me why does this unity of thoughts not suffice for me? Tell me, why does my heart, although united, long for yours? Oh, it is ter-

[1] The only letter which begins in the typical peasant way, with the greeting, "Praised be," etc. In the following letters the greeting is dropped, probably in imitation of the husband's letters. The omission is itself a sign of the loosening of old traditions.

[2] It is interesting to note that the children rapidly outgrow these childish attitudes, naughtiness, disobedience, etc.; the common difficulties, the common fight with poverty, etc., make of them rather the associates of the mother.

592 April 29, 1911

DEAR FATHER: First I inform you that I am in good health, by the grace of Lord God, and I wish you the same with my whole heart. And as to the school, we are going on May 1, and the summer vacation will begin on June 1. And we have no lodging as yet, for all are rented, so we must perhaps take this one after the Kirszenbaums. But it is 80 roubles. Do you allow us to take it or not?

If Mr. Osiecki has not left yet, please father, send me through him an accordeon with bells.

Wishes for name-day: I wish you, father, health, happiness, success, long life, and to see one another soon.

Your truly loving son,

ROMUALD PORZYCKI

DEAR FATHER: If Mr. Osiecki comes back, and if you can, send me through him a ball in a net. [Adds wishes for name-day, copied from a book.]

HELENA P.

593 May 3, 1911

DEAR HUSBAND: First I beg your pardon, Staś dear, that I have so neglected [writing], but, believe me, not from pleasure. It seems to you that I did not write for a long time. Well, but say yourself, what could I write so often? If I had any merry news surely I would hasten with the good tidings, but this monotonous uniformity is always here. Now I have a little more, not merry, but natural news. My dear husband, I received the first 25 roubles in the last week before Easter, and the second 10 roubles only today. . . . . May God reward you. But I must describe to you, what I spent this money on. Well, I bought a suit for Romek, and shoes. This cost me 10 roubles. For Hela I bought a dress, shoes, and a hat, for you know that her nature already claims its own; so I spent for her 11 roubles. I gave 8 roubles to Pawłowska, and what is left? Moreover, I paid some other small debts, so we did not have very merry holidays—sad and modest. If we were together at least, and shared our good or bad fortune, surely it would be merrier. But now, my dear, you are there and I am here, bad fortune separated us. But let us hope in God that we shall once more live together. You ask my advice, dear Stach, what you shall do with your person, come back or not. Oh, if it were

you hearty thanks. We received your letter with the wafer on December 17. . . . .

Your loving, longing, and true-to-death wife, with children,

WŁADYSŁAWA PORZYCKA

590 February 11, 1911

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that I received your letter with wishes and 3 roubles for my name-day on my name-day itself. I thank you very much, father, for the wishes and for these 3 roubles, which came in the worst time, for mother had no money at all, so I took half a rouble for myself and gave 2½ to mother. Mother scarcely saves our life. We paid Pawłowska for the last quarter [rent], and not yet for this quarter. Dear father, take either all of us there or at least me alone. Then we could both earn more than you alone. Dear father, I want to go to school only this year, and then to become a tailor's apprentice, for tailor's work pleases me most, because of the wages and because the work is not hard to learn. I have nothing more to write, only I wish you good health and success.

Your truly loving son,

ROMUALD P.

591 March 15, 1911

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that we are in good health. . . . . Pawłowska rented our lodging, for somebody gave her 70 roubles, and we have not yet rented another. And Rzezuski went to America in the autumn, set up a shoemaker's shop and is getting on pretty well. He has now taken her [his wife] and they left their children with the grandmother. You wrote that Osiecki is to come back. So I would beg you to send me through him a few books, and if you have some old suit send it to me. Mother will have it cut down and I shall have something to walk in. If you went to Pawłowski you would perhaps have better work, for Pawłowski sent 1,000 roubles in all. You wrote us that he perhaps borrowed them, but he answered that he did not borrow a penny. He has paid already 200 roubles to Mr. Tański. Dear father, we still owe Pawłowska for half a year. . . . .[1]

ROMUALD P.

[1] The letter is probably partly dictated by the mother.

dear Staś, consider it in our favor, and take us from here, that I may at least for a moment breathe freely, for I cannot bear all this. . . . .

Your sincerely loving and true wife, with children,

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

Pawłowska agreed with mother for 77 roubles [for the lodging], and she will herself put it into order. But—it would be best, dear father—take us to you.

Your truly loving son,

ROMUALD P.

In Mława it is bad; I should prefer to live in the country.

594 June 27 [1911]

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your letter, which on the one hand rejoiced me, that at last there is a place for me in America, for indeed, dear Staś, in the present state of things my despair goes to my head. If it lasts longer so, I think you will send me to Tworki [insane-hospital], for there is not enough of my head to overcome all this. You have not even an idea how everything has stopped. Whence shall I take [money]? If there were anything to steal, I would steal, but even this is impossible. You always try to comfort me and tell me not to grieve, but all your explanations have had no result yet. You tell me to borrow, but I have already debts enough. Even the Osieckis won't lend me as much as I want, for what are these few roubles when I owe to Pawłowska for a full quarter and she looks sourly at me, and the other quarter is near. Whence shall I take [money]? So I write you the last letter and tell you, let it be once, [for all], either take the children or come yourself and suffer together with us. I write you decidedly, let it be so or so, for here I am neither upon ice nor upon water. I have no lodging. We agreed with Pawłowska about this other lodging, but I did not give her any deposit, for how could I give any? And now she says that she won't give the lodging. So what shall I do with all this? Mad things come to my head with all this. And you tell me to insure myself! Very well, but only where *they will pay me*, for I have nothing to pay with. Osiecki said himself that he would give me money for one ship-ticket, and you could send for the children, but speedily, for the Osieckis intend to leave at the end of July, and I could go with them. But if not, then come yourself, and when you come, it will be more or

in my power, I would add wings that you might return to us. But say, dear, what awaits us here? My dear husband, I don't advise you either so or so, for you know better yourself what to do. You know what we had in our country, and you know what you have there. Do as your reason advises you, and I agree perfectly. As to this debt, it will be as you do it. If you send it partly, I will pay it back; if you put money aside [and send the whole at once], it will be well also. You ask me how much I can spend monthly. I think you know yourself, for we are not more and not less now [than formerly], and we don't spend money for any luxuries. I shall have as much as you send.

So, dear husband, you deceived me, you let me wait 2 months. I waited obediently till at last you wrote me that you could not take me. Thereby I have no lodging now; the lodging we had is rented long ago. I don't know how it will end. . . . . My health is very bad, my strength is leaving me. For a year I have intended to go to a physician, but always something is lacking, either time or money. . . . . And now, dear Staś, I intend to insure myself, for I am afraid for my life, and therefore I intend to insure myself for some hundred roubles. You don't expect to be there long, and cannot, and here we shall not be able to put money aside . . . . and if a black hour comes or if I die, what will be the future of my children? So advise me, dear Staś, what should I do. In my opinion it would be the best if you took us to you. You write that you are anxious about the children, lest they become American [illegible word]. But even in America it cannot be worse than in this accursed Mława. You know yourself that I have nobody here, I am alone, an orphan in the world. I don't go to Piotr [her brother] at all, for you know yourself how good he is. I went once to him, and he was quarreling with her. I could not bear it and said a few words—why does he swear so? When he began to bark against me and you, I thought that I should die from all this. The matter was particularly about you. But don't write him anything.

Dear Staś, believe me that as the fish thirsts for fresh water, so we thirst to be united with you, but not here, only in America. I should prefer to work heavily, and to get away from this hell. . . . . Calculate only what all this costs—living, lodging, fuel, dress. Surely we could live there together. My success is bad, for two more midwives came here, and there is almost nothing to do. So I beg you,

evening. Romuś passed into the fifth division [grade], but on the condition that he will take private lessons for three months at 3 roubles a month. He is a bad comfort to us, for he is sickly and looks very bad. Mother grieves, for it will probably be consumption. Up to the present he did not cough, but now he coughes terribly. Mother intends to go to the doctor with him. Mother also looks bad; sometimes she groans during the whole night. I alone am in good health, and even I was ill for more than a week. Probably you won't find us all here when you come. But perhaps I write letters too often; if you mind the cost, I won't write letters so often. But these letters don't cost me, for I won the paper at a lottery during the exhibition. I thank you heartily for your wishes, but you were mistaken, for my name-day is on March 2, or on May 22. . . . . But even so it is well.

Your loving daughter,

HELENA

We and uncle sent together a letter to the other uncle in America. Perhaps it did not arrive, so please inform him about grandmother['s death].

597 October 30, 1911

DEAR HUSBAND: First I inform you that we are in good health. . . . . Michalina T. married a Sudzieński, cooper from Mława. . . . . They came to live with us but they won't pay any money; they say that it will be on account of the debt. . . . . Dear Staś, I have earned nothing for 5 weeks already, and here you tell me to drink milk. But a quart costs 12 grosz . . . . and there are so many other expenses. . . . . Helcia, thanks to God, is better, and is going to school, for this is all her dowry, so it is impossible to keep her at home. She learns well, better than Romek. I chose for him such a profession [of barber], I think that it is the best for him, not very hard, and healthy, for he is always in movement. I don't know how you think. He likes it, for it is not heavy and is well paid, and he will be able to do it. Rakoski [the employer] praises him. . . . .

Your sincerely loving wife,

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I inform you that after the lessons I go to the barber and learn barber's work. You wrote to send you a photograph, but I have no [Sunday] clothes. So please, father, send me

less better. I don't wish to suffer any more as I do; I have lost my health already. Answer at once, what you intend, for every day is important to me. . . . .

Well-wishing,[1]

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

595 August 17, 1911

DEAR FATHER: I inform you . . . . that the vacation is ending. On September 1 we go to school, and mother does not earn any money now, so when we go to school we need for books and for fees. So I beg you, father, send a few roubles at least for me and for Romuś, so perhaps mother will get somewhere [money for other expenses]. As to these 35 roubles which you sent, mother did not even see them well. Mother owed 12 roubles to Pawłowska from the other quarter and gave her 4 roubles for this quarter and some lesser debts. And mother owes 10 roubles to the Osieckis.[2] Dear father . . . . if you had much money, it would be better to come back to our country, for here it is also well for one who has much money. It is bad only for us, for we have nothing. Write us, is it true that it is so hot in America, for Mania, Mrs. Pawłowska's daughter, writes that it is so hot that people fall down upon the streets. . . . .

Your loving daughter,

HELENA

596 September 23, 1911

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that we received your letters and 20 roubles. You wrote mother to pay my fee from this money . . . . but here is a more necessary debt, that of Pawłowska; she is the first. I shall probably not go to school any more, dear father, for it is too difficult for mother. I must help mother at home. Formerly at least grandmother was in her bed, and it was possible to leave the house, but now [since grandmother is dead] if mother goes somewhere to a sick woman she shuts the house and takes the key with her, and when we come from the school, we must sometimes sit outside till

[1] "Well-wishing" (doubly underscored), instead of "Your loving and true wife," as previously. In contrast with the humble and pleading letters of Teofila Borkowska, Porzycka demands to be united with her husband as her *right*, and this right is based on the fact that they have children, and common duties toward them.

[2] Enumeration of expenses probably dictated by the mother.

night and worry himself in learning lessons, and he is weak, so it is indispensable to have for him always something good to eat. If I did not care for him, he would have been in his grave long ago. [Usual ending.]

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

600 January 20, 1912

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . You have no idea how I am worried. Oh, may God put an end to all this, for I cannot hold out any longer. I have not a happy moment in my life. I have only wasted my young years in longing and grief, alone with these orphans, and I have no hope that it will end soon. Dear Staś, I cannot describe all this to you, for the frame of this letter is too small. If I had wings, like a falcon I would fly to you, even if only for an hour, and tell you everything. Dear Staś, you write me to rent a lodging; I don't think of renting; let it be as it is, for I don't intend to remain here any longer. . . . . The Sudzieńskis don't live with us now. It was too crowded for them. But it is well that they went away, for God forbid living with anybody! . . . . If you send the Tańskis the interest, calculate carefully how much . . . . and as to the whole, they can wait. Better pay Łączyński, for he is at least polite when he comes for money, though he needs it more. . . . .[1] I give you one other advice. Write a letter to Rząp [her cousin] and ask him in my name to help us. He won't refuse us. They are 4 brothers, so even if he has no money he can find a way. Only if you write me anything about Rząp, write upon a separate sheet, for she comes sometimes to me and reads your letter. Let her rather not know, for women are always worse, more avaricious. . . . .[2]

Your sincerely loving wife,

WŁ. PORZYCKA

601 April 4, 1912, Good Thursday

DEAR FATHER: First I inform you that we received today your letter, for which we have waited impatiently, but instead of rejoicing us, it caused us a still greater pain. Mother was already sick and

[1] Lending money is still treated as a personal service and paying a debt as a partial reciprocation. Politeness of the creditor heightens the value of the service.

[2] As we have seen more than once, men have a stronger and more persistent feeling of familial solidarity than women. In this case Rząp is the relative of the writer.

money for the clothes. . . . . Dear father, I cannot die, for I must keep you and feed you in your old days, and if I died who would feed you? . . . . Don't grieve about me, I am healthy, better than before this illness. . . . .

ROMUALD P.

598 November 3 [1911]

DEAR HUSBAND: First I inform you that I received your letter on All-Souls Day. I thank you for it heartily. I am very much pained that you grieve so. We are, thanks to God, in good health, and Romek looks much better. In the summer he bathed too often and this must have done him harm. Now I treat him myself with medical herbs, and he is quite well already, only he requires very good living, and I have not enough for all this. I don't know myself what to do; my practice has ceased totally. I accepted these Sudzieńskis on the condition that I was to receive a few roubles, but the Tańskis arranged that this money might go on account of the debt. They agreed upon 30 roubles. O, dear Staś, may God unite us as soon as possible, for our whole life is only a torture. We are always separated, the one here, the other there, and always in this longing. You think about us, and we about you. Dear Staś, you wrote in your last letter that I ought to pull away from my head this longing and to occupy myself with my duties and with prayer. O, dear Staś, were it not for the prayer and the hope in God, I don't know how I should bear all this. I hope that our Lord God will change it into a better happiness, but meanwhile we must suffer, for such is the will of God. Dear Staś, I beg you, don't grieve, but have confidence in God, and God will comfort us in everything. . . . .

Your truly loving *wife*, with children,

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

599 November 20 [1911]

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . You write about Romek, that if you were here everything would be better. That is true, but even 10 fathers cannot take the place of one mother, particularly with our Romek. He is so delicate and exacting in his constitution that it is not only necessary but indispensable to have always something good for him, for he won't take into his mouth anything not perfect. He cannot eat at all, he is so tired with learning. He must sit till mid-

Unhappy the hour of my wedding! I pity these orphans, for I am ready to take my life away. I cannot overcome all this any more! Could my tears torment you as much as the pain which you cause me! How have you had the conscience to send such a letter!

Your sorrowful wife

602 April 24, 1912

DEAR HUSBAND: First I inform you that I received the letter with money more than a week ago, I cannot [write further.]

Dear father, I announce to you very sad news: Romuś is severely sick. Three illnesses came upon him at once. His heart is bad, his lungs and stomach have caught cold; we don't know how it will turn out. One doctor said that he must go to Warsaw, and Dr. Korzybski tells us to take him to the country. But first, it is difficult for us, and then he has terrible fever and vomits. Mother has almost lost her senses. She began to write this letter, but she cannot do it from grief. If you could appear today in our home and comfort us! For it is worse here today than in a tomb. We thought that we should soon go to America, and Romuś rejoiced that he would visit such a far world, and then suddenly it happened so. Now he says that even if our Lord God gives him his health back he won't go. Write at least letters more often to us, dear father. Now help is needed, and here we have no money. Please write us, father, whether you had foreboding of our grief. Dear father, Mr. Korzybski said that Romek needed this cure long ago, but as long as he could walk we did not notice it, for he said nothing to mother; only now, when he could walk no more [he spoke]. We should like not to grieve you, father, but we have grieved already for some days. If this letter could come to you the soonest possible! I have nothing more to write, only we wish you health and good success.

Your loving daughter,

HELENA P.

Only don't grieve, father, perhaps our Lord God will grant him to recover. Pray, father, our Lord God for his health.

---

individual characteristics of the members themselves. The father's authority is based upon his physical, moral, and intellectual superiority and upon the fact that he is the support of the family; it decreases as these factors decrease. In the present case it is precisely his moral superiority and his willingness to support the family which are in question. Probably the mother's talk has influenced the boy and undermined the father's authority.

got still worse after reading this letter. In a few days the holidays will come, but these holidays, instead of bringing us joy, cause us a still greater pain when we look upon this gay world. Everybody is merry, only we must cry. During the whole of Lent we have fasted truly, and during Easter we shall fast still better, for perhaps we shan't have even a bit of dry bread. You tell us to borrow money from somebody. But why don't you borrow there from somebody? Perhaps somebody there will sooner lend you, for here we are so in debt. We have taken so much on credit in all the shops that nobody wants either to lend us or to give us credit any more, but everybody asks us to pay our debts. You told us not to rent an apartment, and we did not rent any; and now they drive us away from here, for we did not pay the rent for half a year. You travel from town to town and enjoy pleasures, while we die from hunger. It would be better if you sent us the money which you spend on traveling, or if you put it aside. Pawłowski went to Chicago and he stays there and sends her money, though she does not need it as we do, for to whomever she goes among her tenants everybody must give her. Dear father, for the holidays even a beggar clothes his children, while we are like the poorest orphans; we are even ashamed to go out upon the street, for everybody laughs at us. If you could imagine how we look today, as if we had arisen from the tomb, and all this from sorrow. Nothing grieves me so much, even if I were dying from hunger, as the pain and sorrow of my mother, upon which I must look, and already in youth poison my life. As long as I live, I don't remember such a sad time as these holidays which approach for us. I have nothing more to write, only I wish you health and merry holidays.

Your loving son,

ROMUALD PORZYCKI

Don't be angry with me for having described so much misery, but you think perhaps that we are well off here.[1]

[1] The letter is exceptionally hard. A peasant boy would never dare to write to his father in this way. He would have a certain right of control over his father's behavior, but only in matters which constituted a direct breach of the familial solidarity and to the extent proportionate to their respective importance in the family-group. As the father is the actual, while the son only the prospective, head of the family, this right of control could only find its expression in some humble request addressed by the son to the father. In extraordinary cases the son could appeal to the rest of the family, who would then exert an active control. But here the situation is different. The marriage-group is isolated and the respective positions of its members are no longer determined by social tradition, but by the

circle of temperance, i.e., of not drinking any alcoholic drinks—brandy, beer, or wine. I hope that I shall hold, for this is an offering for Poland. Dear father, now people begin to think and act better here, even priests inscribe [boys] into secret associations. May God grant a star of a better future to shine for us. . . . . Amen.

Your son, loving his father and his fatherland
and ready to give his life for them,[1]

ROMUALD

605 June 7 [1912]

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . Romek is still feeble and has not the same strength as before, but there is hope in God that he will recover. Only he needs good food now. He would eat even 10 eggs a day, and here eggs cost 5 grosz each. But I don't spare money for him. . . . . Dear Staś, you write us to go to the country, but it is not possible by any means. Our children are rather well developed [intellectually], and what is there? Shall I send them to Prussia [for season-work]? We have no fortune there, nobody has sown grain for us, everything must be bought as here. Hela passed the examination to the fourth division, but Romek must still remain in the fifth. This illness is the cause of all this. He could have got a job, but now nothing can be done. . . . . Dear Staś, what shall I do with this Romek? He aspires to go to the gymnasium, while all this is difficult. . . . .

Your truly loving wife,

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

Only I beg you, don't grieve, everything will be well, if God grants it.

[1] The patriotic spirit of this letter is evidently a result of the influence of the association about which the boy writes. Secret associations in schools have existed in Poland since the loss of her independence; but their character has changed. At first they were mainly devoted to patriotic purposes, but toward the end of the nineteenth century, particularly in Russian Poland, they occupied themselves mainly with self-instruction. They completed the very deficient education of the Russian schools, not only in the subjects of Polish history and literature, but also in other subjects not treated at all, or only poorly treated in the schools—philosophy, biology, sociology, history of western literatures, history of art. The associations were mainly directed by older students. With the introduction of private Polish schools, within the last ten years, the secret associations have turned from self-instruction to self-education upon a patriotic basis. They imitated formally the "scouting" movement in England, but developed their own moral ideal of patriotism, chivalry, purity, and general efficiency. The association, to which Romek, and later Hela, belonged were of this latter type. The vow of temperance is the first degree of initiation.

603 May 13, 1912

DEAR HUSBAND: First I inform you that we are in good health, and Romek, thanks to God, walks already, but he is still feeble. He lay more than 2 weeks and was severely ill, he had typhoid and his heart was bad. We doubted whether he would live, but God the Merciful comforted us. I did not know any more what to do with all this; for 2 weeks I neither slept nor ate, for he had great fever and I had always to sit with him, and there was nobody here to take my place in anything. It cost me much, the drugs alone, some roubles. None of the doctors accepted any money from me. Dear Staś, I inform you that I received two letters and 25 roubles, for which I thank you heartily. Don't turn your head about [don't trouble yourself about] taking us to America, and leading yourself into still worse debts. If you have good work, stay there until you pay the debt and come back. . . . .

Your loving wife,

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

604 May 14, 1912

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that I am better already, thanks to our Lord God. I have not yet come to my full strength, but I walk already. . . . . I don't go to the school, for the doctor forbade me to go. Dear father, we inform you that the bishop was here and myself and Hela were at confirmation on May 10. Dear father, don't turn your head about taking us to America, rather pay the debt and then come here. It will be better, for Łączyński doubts whether we shall pay him. . . . . Dear father, I wish to go to school next year, but I have no money. It is not indispensable to pay 100 roubles. Whoever is poorer pays as he can, 50 or 25. Some go without paying. Help me only for the first fee, later I will try to earn for myself with lessons [helping the younger students]. Rząp has come already from America and brought many different things for his wife—a gold watch, a ring, a bracelet, and many other things. I have nothing more to write, only I wish you health, and to see one another soon *in our fatherland.* May God grant it. Amen.

Your truly loving son,

ROMUALD ANTONI PORZYCKI

Dear father, please pay first the debt and then come back to us yourself, for now I will never and for nothing go to a foreign country. Here is my fatherland, here I want to live and to die. I joined a

money which you sent 50 roubles must be kept for Romek [for the fee], and the remaining 60 roubles will be spent soon. [Enumerates the expenses.]

Your truly loving wife,

WŁADYSŁAWA PORZYCKA

608 September 16, 1912

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I go to school, I am in the fourth division. . . . . Mother did not want to send me to school this year, but I was stubborn and mother at last agreed. . . . . I thank you a thousand times for remembering me. We don't need anything more, we lack only you, dearest father. I inform you that I joined a circle of temperance. It means not to drink . . . . not to play cards and not to smoke during your whole life. You ask about Romek. He is admitted to the second class of the commercial school and learns well enough. And in the new lodging it is very good for us. Mother has patients. Directly after we moved, the next day, they did not give mother any rest, but she was called to a patient. All would be well, if only our Lord God gave us all health. . . . .

HELENA P.

609 May 22, 1913

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that we received your letter and 50 roubles. . . . . From these 50 roubles we gave to Mr. Tański the interest. Now mother bought for Romek shoes and for herself a dress, and hats for mother and for me. You think perhaps that we spend money here on some unnecessary things, but no, dear father, we spend only on what we need absolutely. Dear father, I am no longer so little, and mother must spend some money on me also, for I cannot walk dressed worse than everybody. . . . . I go to a singing-class, and every Sunday and holiday we sing in the church. . . . . Dear father, Romek teaches four boys and gets from every one of them 1 rouble a month; this money which he earns goes for his school wants. Romek will soon pass an examination, so he must even now worry. Sometimes when he comes from the school he is quite sweating. . . . . Thanks to God, he recovers, he can eat more and has color on his cheeks. He has grown so big that he is already somewhat taller than mother, and I am a little smaller than mother. . . . .

Your sincerely loving daughter,

HELA

606 June 24, 1912

DEAR FATHER: I inform you that I am in good health. . . . . I cannot describe the joy which you caused me by your letter, and I don't know how to thank you for your goodness and the sacrifice which you make for my sake. Dear father, I will prepare myself for the 3d class, but it is not sure whether I shall pass the examination or not. But I shall surely get into the 2d. When I have any certain news, I will inform you. . . . . Dear father, only don't deceive me, for you would then probably cause my early death; I am so given up with my whole life to this learning. Dear father, do your best, for the time is short, and the candidates will be examined on August 20. Dear father, the whole preparation will cost 24 roubles, if I learn 2 hours a day, and 14 roubles if one hour a day. How much the fee will cost I don't know yet. I will write you in a second letter. Dear father, we received your letter and 40 roubles, for which we thank you heartily. . . . .

Your, remaining in uncertainty, truly loving son,

ROMUALD P.

607 [September 16, 1912]

DEAR HUSBAND: I thank you heartily for your kind feelings toward us. May God grant your intentions to be fulfilled, may God give us comfort in our children. They both joined a temperance association. They don't drink even ordinary beer. Romek does not smoke any cigarettes and does not do any silly things. He is always occupied with serious things and learning. In that circle they have their own treasure and library. Romek keeps the library, so he has enough to read and acquires very much knowledge. Dear Staś, you would have much to speak with him; probably you would wonder at his ideas. They have a priest in their association who leads them. Romek always goes to him and receives different national books, and the priest has no secrets from him, talks with him openly about everything [national and moral questions]. And Hela is in the fourth division. She learns well also. I should be glad if she finished at least this school; in any case it would be better for her. Dear Staś, we have begun, but I don't know whether we shall be able to go on, for all this costs very much. The books alone and the clothes take much money—the overcoat of Romek alone 18 roubles, and the shoes and summer clothes. Dear Staś, from this

in a short time. Meanwhile a month passes, then another, and you always postpone. Once you are afraid that somebody is ill, then again that somebody is dead, and we are almost dying here of hunger, and we can really fall sick from grief. For you must also know that mother has very little income, while we must eat every day in order not to die. We should have been dead from hunger long ago if nobody had lent us money. But at last people refuse to lend. So, dear father, I beg you very much, send at least a few roubles for living at the appointed time, for, dear father, I can control myself, but mother is despairing and cursing her life and everything, when she does not see any better prospect before her. I beg your pardon, father, for writing this letter with such reproaches, but don't be angry with me, for I must at last write the truth. I send you the medical advice of our school-physician, how I ought to nourish myself. Just think, father, what a day of living would cost if I nourished myself even partly according to this program. . . . .

ROMUALD

612 [June 25, 1913]

DEAR FATHER: . . . . And now I inform you that we received your letter on June 23, for which I thank you. Dear father, misery came to us seriously, for more than once we have gone hungry to bed. Łączyński comes to us now one or two times every week. He is sick with consumption, so when he comes to us the whole lodging is filled with a foul smell. When once he stayed over night here we all got sick, I and Romek even had vomits. May God grant us to settle the matter with him as soon as possible! Mother has given him 65 roubles back already. Mother earns almost nothing, and here everything is so expensive, pork 41 grosz, beef 38 grosz, so we buy only seldom a pound, and of the worst, the cheapest. So please, father, send us at least a few roubles, for we cannot hold out so any longer. . . . .

HELA

613 July 5 [1913]

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . I received 75 roubles for which I thank you heartily, for we needed it very much. I don't know whether I shall be able to give anything of this money to Łącz., for I have made

610 June 16 [1913]

DEAR AND BELOVED HUSBAND: . . . . I don't know what it means that you don't receive our letters. . . . . We wrote you 3 letters and received an answer to none. I had begun to think that you had followed Osiecki in search for pleasures. But excuse me for writing you such silly things. And as to the money, don't worry. If you send it it will come. Only send soon and plenty, for we need it. I paid Łączyński 65 roubles, for he wants money most; Łączyński is sick with consumption. You write that you will take me and Hela to America, and Romek can be left. But where? With him it is still worse than with a small child, for he has no health and has a very delicate nature. He can by no means be left alone. So if we are to go we will go all together, and if not, then none. . . . .

Your truly loving wife with children,

W. PORZYCKA

DEAR FATHER: You wrote that mother and Hela might go, and I might remain here. I agree with it, and I can remain in the pension. But for vacation where shall I go? Perhaps to you, for here they all leave for vacation. As to the money, dear father, don't trouble yourself whether we shall get it, whether there is not somebody ill; even if so, for a sick person money is useful.[1] Our lessons end on Saturday, June 21, and on Sunday we shall receive the certificates with promotion or not. So if I am promoted to the 3d class, I will inform you. . . . .

ROMUALD

611 June 25, 1913

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I have been promoted to the 3d class, without a second examination. Dear father, you do ill in postponing the sending of money. You wrote that you would send us 50 roubles monthly, and we believed it. So we gave out most of the money which you had sent before, in paying the debts. The rest was spent

[1] There is irony at this point. The father has made some *stupid* excuse for not sending money—that the money might not reach them on account of the probable war, that if the mother was ill there would be no one to go to the post-office for the letter. The remark about vacation above is also ironical. In comparison with No. 601 the moralizing attitude of this and the following letter is more objective and superior. The boy is more under the influence of the patriotic society and of his reading and less under the influence of his mother.

615 August 18, 1913

DEAR FATHER: . . . . As to that America, we discussed and decided either to go all together or to remain and not to take upon us the burden of a new debt. This would be still better than to go. Mr. Nowakowski asks you whether work is good and whether it is worth while to go to America. It is also hard for them to live, and the priest [a brother or uncle] cannot suffice for everything.[1] Dear father, when we saw your photograph we were awfully pained that you look so bad, but later we comforted ourselves that the photograph is bad. . . . .

ROMUALD

616 August 18, 1913

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I received one rouble from you, for which I thank you heartily. I am somewhat pained that you always make a difference between us two. We are never equally treated, but he aways gets more than I do, as if I were not your daughter. But nothing can be done. Dear father, if you love Romek more than me, what can I do? Dear father, I lent this rouble to mother, for she had no money, but soon we shall go to school; then mother will give it back. I shall have it for the fee, if you are so gracious as to send me 2 roubles more. For books perhaps mother will give me, if she earns.

HELENA

617 September 10, 1913

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I am in the 3d class and am learning well enough, for I cannot say very well. To Mr. Łączyński we owe still 15 roubles of the sum, and the interest, 28 roubles, together 43. Mr. Ł. is a very good man for he counted the interest only for 3 years, at 8 per cent. Dear father, Mr. Pawłowski came back [from America], but he intends soon to go there again, for he has nothing to do here. He acquired a higher culture [irony]. I send you my photograph and, I beg you, send me yours, but a better one, for I was only grieved in receiving the former one. . . . .

ROMUALD

618 October 20, 1913

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I inform you . . . . that Romek was very ill . . . . and now, although he walks, it is with difficulty. . . . . Dear father, he is a bad comfort for us, for he is always sick, only

[1] For the rôle of a priest in the family cf. Rzepkowski series.

some debts, and I must pay these first of all. . . . . Dear Staś, don't be angry with us if the children have described to you too much of our misery in that last letter, but I was not at home. And you know, my dear, that here if one has no money he does not know what to do, for it is even difficult to borrow, because here everybody has scarcely enough to live. . . . .

Dearest Staś, write me how do you live there. Are you not worried with this solitary life? For I, when I pass this time in mind, it seems very, very long. Three years and a half we have led such a martyr life! For there is nothing worse than longing. And you are so indifferent, you don't even deign to send us your photograph! Send it, I beg you, at least on a postcard; it will cost cheaper. . . . .

Your truly loving wife,

WŁADYSŁAWA PORZYCKA

My condition is very bad.

614 July 23, 1913

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I inform you that we received 40 roubles, from which we gave 25 to Mr. Łączyński. [Enumerates all the expenses.] Dear father, believe now everything that we write you, for we write you the sincere truth. Even if we wished to add anything, we could not, for you look always at us and see everything, and we can hide nothing at all. Dear father, we have your picture. Although you did not deign to send us your photograph, we had a larger copy made of an old one. Dear father, now it is at least a little more gay, we have somebody to speak to. But what! We speak, and you don't wish to answer us.[1] So it would be the best if you earned much money and came to our country, or if we went to you. And if not, then take me to you. I could at least cook for you, and you would not have to pay me, and it would be better for us. . . . .

And Romcio always does nothing but go to the forest and read books. He is already a hundred times fatter than I, and as you know, bigger than mother.

Your truly loving daughter with her mother and

Romciuchno [affectionate diminutive of Romuald]

[1] An example of the primitive attitude toward photographs and pictures. The photograph of the dear person seems for the peasant as well as for the child to mean much more than to a sophisticated man, to convey much more feeling of life and reality. In *all* the series of peasant letters this is manifested.

wrote to us and wants us absolutely to come there, for work is very good there. But these are vain dreams. Did you receive a letter from Uncle Piotr [asking for a ship-ticket]? If you received it, please father, don't trouble yourself about him, for he has not deserved it. Mother has wept bitter tears more than once because of him. And he takes now work from Wichrowski. Such is the shop he keeps [i.e. none at all]. Dear father, we overwhelm you with only questions in this letter, but we have nothing to write, so we write at least this. . . . . We are satisfied with your photograph, you look very well . . . . but you look sad and upon your face weariness is marked. [Lessons.] I beg you, father, write more, for when you write this one page we have nothing to read. When Mr. Rzezuski writes a letter, there are at least 5 sheets; she must read it during a whole week. . . . .

HELENA

621 March 20, 1914

DEAR FATHER: . . . . You ask us to reflect about that America. But we can by no means leave Romek here. [Money received; expenses.] Dear father, my studies are going on well enough. I hope that this year I shall finish this school. Now here, in Mława, a new four-class school will be opened. I should be glad if I could finish at least these 4 classes. There it would cost 40 roubles a year in each class. Mother's income is rather bad. You know, sometimes she has so much work that she can find no time, and then for a month there is nothing. . . . .

Your loving daughter Helena . . . . with her mother and Romcio, her dear little brother, who was today at confession. I was last Saturday.[1]

622 March 28, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . You write that you are too much disgusted with such a life. Nothing can be done, my dear. For me it is also very painful to worry so alone. Perhaps I must even bear

[1] Before going to confession it is the habit to beg the pardon of everybody for any past wrongs, and any evil doing on the day of confession is considered particularly degrading. It is also considered exceptionally mean to wrong anyone who has been recently to confession. Therefore days of confession are days of exceptional harmony in family life. The end of Hela's letter is the expression of this.

seldom a little better. Mother grieves terribly and weeps continually. Mother weeps from sorrow and sings at the same time. It would be better if you were at home. [Money received; expenses.] Dear father, there would be no misery in our home any more, if only Romcio were in good health. We inform you that Uncle Piotr wrote to Yonkers, to Uncle Jan [both mother's brothers] asking him for a ship-ticket, and he intends to go to America, for his affairs are very bad; he does not keep his shop any more. . . . .

HELENA

619 November 5, 1913

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . Romek was seriously ill but, thanks to God, it passed, although he is never very well, for his disease remains for his whole life. He suffers with heart-disease, and this cannot be healed. Hard is the life of such a man, for he is unable to work, except with his head . . . . so learning is indispensable to him. Dear Staś, I inform you about my success. My success is so bad that I earn almost nothing. We live only on what you send. Dear Staś, you write that you will come on Christmas. Oh, how glad I should be if this lonely life of ours came to an end! But if you come here and we have not a rouble with us, how shall we live, since this year everything is so dear? Prices were never so high. Do as you think best, my dear, but may you not wish to go for the fifth time [keep going]. Piotr has failed so utterly that he does not even keep his shop. He has many debts, and even 500 roubles mortgage. Janek refused to send him a ship-ticket. He justified himself saying that Piotr won't be admitted, because he lacks fingers on one hand. Now he does not know himself what to begin. And the cause of all this is liquor. . . . .

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

620 January 29, 1914

DEAR FATHER: . . . . We don't know now what to do with this lodging, whether we should remain or not, for it is very small, and if you come, it would be too crowded. So tell us positively whether you will come or not. Then we shall know what to do. Dear father, did you receive our letter for Christmas with a wafer, in which we informed you about the death of F. Łączyński and the illness of Pawłowski? Did Uncle Bogorski from Chicago write to you? He

Just now we received . . . . those 53 roubles. We thank you, father, for this money, which will be very useful to us. Now I shall enumerate what we shall spend it for. First we must pay the rent for a quarter, interest to Tański, mother and Hela [I] have no shoes, Hela has no overcoat. Don't be angry, father, for it is obligatory; I have nothing to wear. Oh! And I have no hat! So calculate please, how much I alone will cost: shoes at least 4 roubles, overcoat some 10 roubles, a hat about 2 roubles, together 16 for me alone. And mother and Romek? Really it is worth crying that you have such spongers who only spend your earnings. And I am the worst. Now they croak against me at home, that they must spend so much for me. But judge yourself, father, can I be the worst [dressed] of all? And now mother is against me for this handkerchief [saying] that you did not send anything to her [favorite] child, but only to your [favorite] child. . . . .

HELENA

625 July 6, 1914

DEAR FATHER: . . . . I have passed to the 4th class with a small second examination in German, but it is no matter, for during the vacation I will learn and later it will be more easy for me with the German. Dear father, aunt [Piotr's wife] died on June 30, and already people are recommending another wife to uncle. Hela has finished her school already, but we don't know what to do with her now, and where to place her. . . . . Dear father, we have not had any letter from you for a long time, so we are grieved, for we don't know whether you are healthy or sick, or perhaps you have no work. We expected a letter from you at least for mother's name-day, but you did not send any even for the name-day, so we make the supposition that something bad happened to you, or perhaps you forgot about us. But this latter supposition is impossible. . . . .

ROMUALD

626 July 29, 1914

DEAR FATHER: First I inform you that we received your letter and 40 roubles in our new apartment. They were just enough for the apartment, for we had to pay 40 roubles for half a year. The apartment is expensive, but what can we do if all the apartments are now expensive. We should perhaps have found a cheaper one, but

more pains than you, for I am a woman, and still—and still I accept my lot. Yes, dear, let us sacrifice ourselves for our children, because we live only for them. Were it not for them I should have been with you long ago. Dear Staś, you reflect whether Romek cannot be left alone. This is totally impossible. He needs continuous care, for he has no health. How often it is necessary to rise at night when he has a heart attack, and to help him. He is weak like a small child. He is a good boy and I love him strongly, but unhappily there is no great hope for his future. He learns well. Now we must pay 25 roubles for his second quarter. [Usual ending.]

WŁADYSŁAWA P.

623 April 20, 1914

DEAR FATHER: [Health; money and letter received.] We were very glad when we received your letter on Good Friday, particularly Romek. He ordered us to go at once, before the holidays, saying that he would be alone [for Easter]. Dear father, you write for me and mother to come. Oh, how glad we should be to go at once! But, dear father, it would be difficult for us to part with our sickly fellow Romek. Although he troubles me [teases or beats a little] sometimes, yet I love him and it would be difficult for me to go away from him, and mother also cannot reconcile herself with leaving him alone. . . . .

Your truly loving daughter,

HELENA

624 April 24, 1914

DEAR FATHER: . . . . We received today your letter, in which you write about having sent 53 roubles and in which was a silk handkerchief. I thank you with my whole heart for this handkerchief. I have not even words enough to thank you. Everybody wanted to have this handkerchief, Romek, and even mother. Romek wanted me absolutely to give it to him, but I would not give it even for a thousand roubles, for it is a token from my dear beloved father, and such a token should not be given to anybody, even to the emperor himself. Dear father, you send me always something, and what shall I send to you? Now I cannot yet, but when I grow big, I will try to reward you perhaps, if only with a trifle. . . . .

guns, a score of civilians and children were wounded, we don't know whether from the aeroplane or by the falling bullets. Up to the present we are alive, thanks to God, but we cannot assure you that we shall not perish very soon. The wounded find no longer a place in the hospitals, though there are now two or three of them on every street. Dear father, everything is very dear here now, for no supplies are brought. Many things cannot be bought at all, for they are lacking. Perhaps we shall die not of bullets but of hunger, for this also is quite possible. So we all bid you farewell, for perhaps we shall see one another never more upon this earth. It is a pity that you did not take us to you, perhaps there we should be safer. . . . . Dear father, we have paid all our money to the landlord, as rent for half a year, and now we have nothing to live on. . . . .

Your sincerely loving son,

ROMUALD

628 August 24, 1914

DEAR FATHER: [Repeats in part the news in the letter of August 10.] We stayed at first in Mława, hoping that things would get quiet, and then we had nowhere and no money to fly. Later Mrs. Wasilewska's husband, who is a sergeant and knows about the movements of the army, said that the Russian army would fall back, and told his wife to fly to her family in Kosiny. Mother knows the Wasilewskis well, and Wasilewska wanted to take us with her, so we went also to Kosiny, but after two days we returned on foot to Mława, as it was a little quieter. Meanwhile the Russian army fell back, and Germans, to the number of 20,000, entered Mława and let nobody out. They made trenches around Mława and began to commit different abuses—burned houses and windmills, robbed the farmers, and behaved as if in their own town. In such activities they spent a week in Mława, and on August 20 the Russian cavalry and artillery drove them away from Mława. . . . . Now we need not fear the Germans, but we don't know what will happen next. The Poles are going with the Russians. The Germans threw proclamations from their aeroplanes to the Poles, asking them to help them, and when they win, they will give us Poland back. But they work in vain, for the Russians also wrote a proclamation in which they promise us autonomy and such laws as were during the Polish times, and the Poles believe the Russians rather than the Germans. . . . . Dear

we learned too late that Rzezuska had rented [our old one]. But, never mind, here we have at least comfort, and even if you came you would have room enough to work, and mother perhaps will have better success than there, in that hole. Dear father, inform us what is the news in America, for here a terrible war is probable. They wanted to take Romek to prison, for he went beyond the town with some companions. The border is now open, and soldiers keep guard in the fields. Even the farmers who bring their crops in must have papers from the mayor that they have the right to go. Perhaps we shall be killed here, so please send us, father, some money, 1,000 roubles at least, so we shall be able to fly somewhere before this war, for it is impossible to remain so. And if with you there is also such misery [as you wrote?] come rather to us; we will put these miseries together. We live on Niborska Street, facing the hospital; our house is surrounded with a garden. Romek is so healthy here that we can hardly give him enough to eat, and we eat also rather well; a loaf and a half of bread is used every day, while formerly we took half a loaf for two days. . . . .

HELENA

627 August 10, 1914

DEAR FATHER: . . . . We find ourselves now in a very critical situation, because we are in the midst of the greatest war. Mława is near the frontier and therefore it is most disturbed. We received your letter with the handkerchief and 3 roubles on the day before the war, for the next day communication was interrupted and trains no longer come to Mława nor leave it. The telegraphs [wires] are broken, the post abandoned, the [governmental] bank abandoned, all the officers and all the officials have gone away. The army has been mobilized, and uncle [Piotr] was also taken, but then set free because of his hand. The Russian army was in Iłłowo and Działdowo and tried to take Nyborg, but was checked for they had no infantry. On the very first day the Prussian station in Wólka and the bridges were blown up, and now larger or smaller battles are fought around Mława. The Russian army is camping now in Mława and in its neighborhood. German aeroplanes fly every day above our Mława, and just now one of them went away; they are still shooting at it from guns. This morning, when a German aeroplane flew over Mława and they began to shoot at it from cannons and machine-

stones at the passengers. As to me, I cannot become Americanized, for in the old country I had easier work. There I was a shoemaker, while here I must work in an iron-foundry, and even this goes on feebly. For the last few months I have worked scarcely two or three days in a week. So I sit here as upon sharp nails and wait for the incidents of the war in Poland. I am longing for my family, because I have had no news for more than two months. I don't know whether they are alive or not. Wishing to save my family from hunger, I sent on October 24, 80 roubles, but I have no certitude whether they received them. Probably they did not, for the governmental post-office in Mława is abandoned, and my family may not be there, for Mława, as it seems, has changed her proprietors 4 times already. . . . . As to my verses [a humoristic piece, printed in the Polish paper *Zgoda*], I thank you very much for your praise. . . . . I have never been a man of letters. Perhaps if I had studied in that line I should have some aptitude. This one I composed in free moments and I doubted whether the editors would deign to print it. . . . .

STANISŁAW PORZYCKI

father, you can easily guess that there is now great misery here. . . . . We live only on what anybody lends or gives us. . . . . So we beg you, if you can, send us at least a few roubles, or else we shall die from hunger. We send this letter through Japan, but whether it will reach you, we don't know. But a drowning man grasps even a razor. . . . .

ROMUALD PORZYCKI

629 January 5, 1915

RESPECTED SIR: . . . . You ask for details concerning my family. I give them to you. My wife is now 36 years old, my son Romek 17, my daughter Hela 15. As to my wife, you are not mistaken in saying that she is very nervous. Any insuccess influences her much, she gets sick and does not eat for a day or two. As to Romek, he was not so sick when a child . . . . he had no heart-disease. While I was still at home, I soothed and softened everything. When I was leaving, my wife asked me to bring them as soon as possible to America. During the first and second year I could not do it, for I had no steady work; I could scarcely send them from time to time a few roubles. I had borrowed money for my journey to America, so there were more than 200 roubles of debt left. Thus my wife was obliged to pay the interest and from time to time a few roubles of the sum out of my small wages. Even today there are more than 100 roubles to pay back. Thus, during three years I was unable to send a ship-ticket. After 3 years Romek finished the governmental [town-] school and wrote me that he wanted more instruction. I permitted him; I could not refuse to the child the permission to learn. But the expenses increased, and it was really as bad as they wrote. With my small earnings I could not send them much. And thus Romek, seeing his mother always crying from longing and despair, might have got his heart-illness even through this, for he is very sentimental, like his mother, while Hela has my iron nature. My wife wished at first to come to America, because she would have come with them both. But later Romek did not want for anything in the world to leave off learning, and his mother did not want to leave him alone with strangers, for, as she mentions to me, he needs care like a small child. And I agreed and was glad that he did not want to come to America, only wants to live in his own country, for I don't like the American education of children. Here the child is not morally educated, it knows no respect for its elders. It knows only how to throw snow or

a sharp resentment, but the smaller group is by the fact of the resentment thrown more and more back upon itself, until its isolation is greater than that of the modern family.

Another interesting point in this connection is the important part played by the woman in the constitution of the new family. This rôle is complicated, as is the situation of the woman itself. In the old group the woman's position in the family was in one respect more secure than in the new one, because she was backed by her group. But, on the other hand, the woman's relation to her husband and children always tended to be as exclusive and personal as possible; she always occupied the standpoint of particular individuals, not that of the group as a whole. And thus the new group appears from this point of view as a realization of a certain tendency of the woman—the tendency to substitute a few subjective personal relations for the many objective social relations. In all the cases in which the new group is or tends to be constituted, the woman seems to be the principal factor of its unity and isolation. But as she has not the help of any social traditions her success depends upon her personality.

The whole evolution in the Jabłkowski case seems relatively recent, for the older generation has preserved much of the traditional peasant attitude. Probably the Jabłkowskis are the children of peasants, who settled in the city.

630–48, TO KONSTANTY JABŁKOWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN, IN POLAND

630 LUBLIN, December 28, 1913

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: I received your letter with Christmas wishes and the postcard with New Year wishes, and I thank you heartily. O dear husband, I thank you once more for

In the present case we have the only example of a perfectly solidary and harmonious "natural family," as the result of an evolution which has substituted individual bonds between the members of a marriage-group for traditional social bonds between the members of the "large family."

We see also an important social consequence of this evolution—the particularly marked isolation of the marriage-group from the rest of the community, even from the relatives who in the old organization would be the most important members of the group, namely, the parents of the man and the woman and the brothers and sisters. On the one hand, the marriage-group, perfectly solidary within itself, acts in economic and social matters toward the rest of the community as toward strangers, sometimes even with a marked hostility; on the other hand, any action from outside is received as affecting the marriage-group as a whole. In this respect the reactions to external influences tending to disaggregate the group—gossip, efforts to compel the husband or the wife to act in economic matters in a personal way—are significant. These influences themselves, the more or less unfriendly acts of neighbors, acquaintances, relatives, which Jabłkowska attributes to "jealousy," are perhaps better understood if we take into consideration the very natural hostile attitude of the social environment toward so isolated and impenetrable a familial group. The old type of family, at least in Poland, has no place for such an isolation. Under these conditions it is obvious that when for any reason the marriage-group tends to separate itself sharply from the family-group the latter not only shows

631 February 17, 1914

MOST BELOVED FATHER: I thank you very nicely for the scrap upon which you wrote a few words for me. Dear father, you tell me to learn to be an iron-moulder. But I won't learn to be an iron-moulder, for it is a hard speciality. One earns a few roubles more, but he must work like an ox. And here if a moulder is kept anywhere, he is, but if they throw him away he cannot find work, but must work as a simple laborer. Thus it happened with Hojnacki. You write me that any peasant can do the work which I do. But you don't know yet what work it is. Myka wanted to work at the light and said that he had worked at the light in the cement-factory, but they refused to admit him for they were afraid he would spoil something. . . . . I learned for almost half a year in helping an electro-technician, and as he liked me he explained to me everything . . . . so that now if I got a plan, I could instal the light myself, and I can decompose and recompose a dynamo machine. . . . . And if the factory stops I can do locksmith's work. . . . . I earn now almost 25 roubles, and later I shall have almost 35 roubles, or even more. Now, dear father, don't trouble about me. I shall find my way and even help you.[1] Now, dear father, I need a suit for Easter, for this one which I have is quite spoilt . . . . and I need also shoes, for these which I have are torn. . . . . Besides this, dear father, send me some neckties . . . . and if they reach me I shall beg you to send me perhaps 2 stiff shirts, for I have only one such . . . . and it is not enough. I must take it to the laundry too often. . . . .

JAN JABŁKOWSKI

632 February 21, 1914

MOST BELOVED AND DEAREST HUSBAND: I received your letter . . . . written on February 8. . . . . As to lending money, you may be calm, for I am not so silly as to lend money or to warrant for anybody. You know that I am not very eager to do such things. I won't lend to my brother either, for I know how eager he is in paying back. . . . .[2] Now you ask about my overcoat. It is a little worn

[1] We have here the new attitude toward work—appreciation of skill and efficiency—as stated in the Introduction: "Economic Attitudes."

[2] A sign of the degree to which the old solidarity is dissolved. In peasant life money should be lent, not only to so near a relative, but to any member of the community, and the question of his paying the debt would hardly be raised as self-evident. So the solidarity between members of the family is here weaker than the traditional solidarity between members of the community.

your letters, for I was in very great sorrow during the whole holidays, because I had no letters. I wondered much why, and I thought so, that perhaps you were sick from all this sorrow. So when I received the letter, I cried from joy. . . . . You write me not to answer this last letter of yours but I do answer, for some days have passed since I have written you a postcard, and you would have no letter from me for a long time. When I receive another letter from you I shall have also something to write, for now I shall be a little calmer and I will calculate all the money which I spent and what I spent it for. For I tell you, dear husband, I was so grieved after the letter which you wrote me before that I thought I should never calm myself. And after that I had no letter for almost 2 weeks. And moreover I got a letter from Stasiak on December 23, and . . . . I did not send him that letter back, for you told me not to write letters to anybody. Answer me whether you speak [are on speaking terms] with Stasiak, for he wrote me that he is not guilty of the offense against me in Koźlak's letter to his wife. He excused himself that he wrote whatever Koźlak told him to write [dictated], and he said that it was exclusively Koźlak's fault; he [Stasiak] could not go into a cellar and write the letter so that nobody might see it [*scil.*, somebody has read or heard what Koźlak dictated and thus gossip arose]. He wrote many more words, but I don't repeat everything for it would take too much time to write. But he begged my pardon very much and said that he did not [intend to] offend me in that letter in any way. He wrote that he was not a traitor to you and never had been. He is only very pained that Janek [the writer's son] called him in his letter a rascal and a Ham [for having offended Janek's mother], and he wrote a few words to Janek saying that he would remember it. . . . . Finally he wrote thus: "I won't write you any more news; you will learn from your friend [husband?] who is a rascal toward us." And to Janek he wrote: "Don't ever write such letters to anybody, for if I were really such a rascal as you write, this letter would have cost you dear. If you don't believe me, ask your father." And he wished us a Merry Christmas and New Year. So I beg you, dear husband, very much, don't quarrel with these swine. I beg you once more, don't quarrel. Forget your wrong; why should you waste your health in vain? . . . .

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

633 March 5, 1914

DEAR AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: I beg you, don't forget to write the date of my letter, for I don't know to which of my letters you answer. [Details about health of herself and the boys.] Mania [daughter] is in good health, thanks to God, only her eyes are a little red, as when you were here. If she does not cry they are not red, and as soon as she cries a little they become red again; . . . . and she is so inclined to cry this daughter of yours. . . . . She says always that father is not here and there is nobody to dance with her. . . . . And she is so wrathful that you have no idea. Janek sometimes teases her or tells her something [reprimands her] or gives her a tap—not very much, but he wants her now, when she is bigger, to be more careful and polite, not to play with the first best, not to run about the street, and to learn well. Thus, when he tells her anything and gives her a tap, she flares up and jumps at his eyes and beats him and kicks him with her feet and refuses to yield. I always make remarks to her and tell her not to flare up at Janek, for he is older and big. And she tries to beat Oleś also, and he has to run away from her. Although they strike her sometimes first she pays them twice as much back.[1] If I strike her with a "discipline" [short whip], she begins to cry awfully and runs into the room and calls, "O my God, my God! O father, father!" and she calls as if she were already an orphan. So I cannot beat her often, for I begin immediately to pity her; I prefer rather to beg her. And in the school she is also difficult, for her teacher told me that she is very self-conceited and does not allow anybody to tell her anything; when anybody says a word, she answers him. She wants all other children to respect her, and she is still not wise enough to be proud and not to talk with the first best.[2] So I

[1] In addition to possible constitutional independence, the girl has not been brought up in the custom of obeying her brothers. Cf. the contrary attitude of Stasia in the Krupa series. The custom loses its force in the industrial milieu and in the absence of the large family-group.

[2] Here, as at some other points in this series, we see the principle of social hierarchy applied to children and carried to a ridiculous minuteness. It did not originate in the country, but in towns. It consists, generally speaking, in the selection of playmates for the children by the parents. This selection exists to some extent in the country, but there it is based mainly upon the consideration of a morally good or bad example which the child may have in its playmates, not upon any idea of the latters' social position. Thus, the son or daughter of a noble can play freely with such peasant children as are known to be good and not spoiled (particularly in sexual matters). But the background of this liberty is the unexpressed and sometimes only half-conscious idea that the distance is too great

on the front side, about the pockets and sleeves, but it does not look so bad yet. You write me, dear husband, to buy a fur collar, but now I don't want to buy any, for spring is near. Since I did not buy in the beginning of the winter I won't buy now, for immediately some persons would be found ready to say that I did not buy it for winter, only for summer. . . . . And I shall put this whole 100 roubles into the savings-bank; I won't divide it. As to the debts, I owe 8 roubles to my father, which I lacked to live, for I have not worked for almost a month and Janek's salary does not suffice for our household, because I spend now on everything one rouble a day. Yes, my dear husband. So I took 7 roubles for living and 1 rouble for your mother, together 8 roubles. I have not yet paid these 2 roubles to your mother which I owed her, but I gave her this 1 rouble, for she was at the wedding of your foster-daughter. Tomaszewski came to invite me and mother to that wedding, but what was the need to them of my going there.[1] And now, dear husband, I owe still 10 roubles to Gelblum [Jewish shopkeeper] on the booklet [in which goods taken on credit are inscribed]. So I write you, dear husband, that I shall put these 100 roubles into the bank and I won't pay these debts.[2] Father does not need money much so I will pay him 1 rouble on my pay day and 1 rouble on Janek's pay day and thus I shall pay it back gradually. And from Gelblum I won't take now on the booklet, but as far as possible for cash, until you send me money for the children's clothing; then perhaps a few roubles will remain from the clothing, and these I shall pay to Gelblum. For the children need clothes absolutely. Janek must have another suit for going out, and Oleś has only one which has been repaired already and he has nothing to put on when he goes to church. Now, as to the Jałozos [husband's sister and brother-in-law], I shall write you what a *bryndza* [literally sheep-cheese; slang for "bad condition," "misery" or "disorderly life"] there is now, only in another letter, for now I am not particularly healthy. I have toothache and my arm pains me. . . . . Goodbye, my dear Kostuś, for I long very much without you. I kiss you heartily innumerable times.

Your wife,

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

Now I kiss you once more strongly. Now, dear husband, Oleś was a little angry, because you did not send kisses for him in your letter.

[1] Another attitude which would be quite incomprehensible in a peasant group.

[2] In order not to destroy the round number. A vestige of the qualitative character of economic quantities. Cf. Introduction: "Economic Attitudes."

were at home. . . . . Janek and Oleś exchanged their watches, Oleś himself wanted to change. . . . .

Now, my dear husband, I want to tell you a few words about the Jałozos. Kasia [the wife] does not come to us; Michał came once, but I was not at home. [Your] mother goes sometimes to them. Once, when she came back, she cried so much, saying that they are in such misery. They did not pay the rent and a complaint against them was made. The police wanted to levy on their furniture, but they carried it to another house and have only a bed of boards, while the children sleep upon the floor. And they quarrel among themselves. Michał tells her to go to work, but she says that she had a fortune [dowry] and won't go to work. But he says that he has her fortune in his buttock [despises it]. What [he says] is a fortune worth when she does not know how to manage the household? A woman is worth more who knows how to manage everything, although she is poor.[1] And mother told him to try to get a janitor's job. She [Kasia] has sent a boy twice already asking me to lend them money, but let her wait till I do it. But your mother would carry everything to Kasia. Your mother is just like my father, who would carry everything to———[probably another daughter] and would not say, "You ought not to give." There was a little poppy which they brought from Wola; I don't even know when mother carried it out. But never mind the poppy. She asked me to give her the old shoes of Mania, and I gave them.[2] I shall describe more in another letter. . . . . Goodbye, dear husband, I kiss you heartily.

Your always well-wishing and loving wife,

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

I kiss you once more strongly, dear husband, and goodbye. Work happily with God.

634 March 17, 1914

MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: [Letters received and written; description of her sickness.] Now I tell you, I was so worried when I lay in bed, you have no idea, and it is impossible to describe, because you

[1] An appreciation more adapted to the conditions of town-workmen than to those of farmers, for in the first case fortune has merely an additional value as compared with the salary, while in the second it is absolutely fundamental for the whole life-organization.

[2] In this connection the older generation is simply carrying out the ideas of familial solidarity.

told her that I would write to you, but she does not know that I write really. So don't write to her all this that I tell you, for she always says that she will improve, and it would be very painful for her. For she is very good and obedient when I send her to do anything, only she is so hasty and wrathful. You may always admonish her in your letter to learn well, to be good, not to fight with boys at home and in the school. [Details about health of the family; page and a half about the clock which is out of order; two pages about floors, windows, and humidity in the apartment.] But perhaps all this will hold until you come back, for I don't want to occupy myself [with repairing]. I have already the whole house upon my head, for although, my dear husband, you keep all our home in your memory, yet it is not as if you

---

for any undesirable familiarity to arise, either between the parents or between the children when they grow up. It is the same principle which allows the country nobleman to be on much more familiar terms with the peasant or the Jew than with anyone of the middle class, and which gives the members of the highest aristocratic families the greatest freedom in selecting friends. But in towns, where social distinctions are very minute and there is a continuous passage from the lowest to the highest class, the task of keeping these distinctions up is a very difficult one, the more so, the lower the given class and the more insignificant the basis of distinction. And as the intimacy of children may lead to an intimacy of parents, and the friendship made in childhood may last in later days, the parents are very careful to select for their children playmates of the same or of a higher social standing and to keep them far from any connection with those of a lower level. A second factor acts here also and compels parents to make the selection. It is the importance of manners. In this respect the country nobility relies upon tradition, heredity, and the general home atmosphere and is not afraid that the children would lose their good manners in playing with peasant children. The same does not hold in towns, particularly in the lower-middle class, where good manners are an artificial and imitated product and can be easily lost. Finally, the moral consideration plays in towns a more important part than in the country, as town-children are generally more spoiled, and it is more difficult to avoid undesirable contact.

The result of all this is, that no child of a "self-respecting" family can select its companions without the control of its parents, not even in school; and particularly no playing upon the street is permitted. And as only those who have little or nothing to lose in social standing let their children play upon the street, the street-children constitute really a dangerous element for the others, from the moral point of view.

Evidently, there is an incalculable but very strong influence of this whole system of control upon the psychology of the young generation. It must be noted, however, that a movement of democratization in the higher classes began some 20 or 30 years ago and is growing. The control of the children in this respect still exists, but is based more and more upon merely moral considerations. But this movement has not yet reached the lower classes, who remain as rigid in their distinctions as formerly.

listen to anybody except you. For if we listen to everything that people bark with their tongues, we should be well off! If I wrote to you everything that I hear from women who have their husbands in America! For if their husbands are of a bad conduct, they think and say at once that all are the same. But I don't listen to anybody except you for you have ever written me not to listen. Yes, dear husband. [Usual ending.]

MARCYANNA

MY MOST BELOVED AND DEAREST FATHER: I am healthy and I wish you the same with my whole heart. And now, dear father, you write that you won't come until the next year. But, dear father, don't think this; it won't be so. For mother says that she will not stop working until you come. And do you know, father, that mother is sick, but goes to work nevertheless. And I beg you, father, very much, earn for the journey and come, for I am very much worried. When Sunday comes, mother does not go anywhere, and I have not even 1 companion and must play alone, so I am very much worried. I have nothing more to write, I kiss you innumerable times, your hands and lips. Goodbye.

MARYSIA J.

635 March 22, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: . . . . You ask me why were the children not authorized by me in [writing] their letter. I was working at night when they wrote the letter to you, and when I came back they told me that they wrote to you for money for clothes. I intended myself to write you about it, but they hastened for they were afraid lest the money should be too late and they could not buy before Easter. They told me about it, and I see myself that it is necessary to buy. Janek told me to take money from the bank, but I said that I won't take it. . . . . Seeing that I was not in a hurry to write to you, he wrote. . . . . And Mania did not write to you for anything, for she has with me the 4 roubles which you sent her for her name-day. I took this money for living and now must give it back, for she always asks for it saying that father sent it. . . . . Janek has earned now 11 roubles for he took night-work. . . . . He took 6 roubles of these, for he always takes 1 rouble [for his personal expenses] and bought shoes for 5 roubles, so 5 were left for me. [More about money-matters.] Now, dear husband, as to this exchange of watches, Oleś himself wanted to exchange, for his watch is more difficult to wind up, and he was afraid of spoiling it; he changed himself, voluntarily. He has earned already more than a rouble for

were not at home. For it seemed to me that if you said to me even a single word I should be healthier. Moreover, letters are now so late from you; they don't arrive normally. . . . . Now, dear husband, as to the good heart, whether I have a good heart toward you or not, I tell you only this, that as I love God and want my soul's salvation after my death, I always love you and always have a good and constant heart toward you. Yes, my dear husband. And I would never write any testy things in my letters, but yourself, dear husband, you lead [incite] me to do it. And I shall write you, my dear, a few words from a good heart. My dear, when you learn anything about me and it does not please you, you ought to write me at once, "So and so, my dear (or however else, in your manner), and I hear that you have been where I don't wish you to go." For I even acknowledge that you are right when you write that it is not a fit company for me, and I regretted myself that I was there and I said to myself that I will never more go anywhere. And you write me about it after a year, as if you had waited for something more to make a conviction against me. Yes, my dear husband, I shall never be angry with you, even if you write me something like this in every letter and if you make any remarks to me, for you have the right and you ought to make remarks to me without any fear, if you are displeased with anything, and I shall listen to you at any time. Yes, my dearest husband.

[Calculation of income and expenses.] My dear husband, once more I make this remark, for you write precisely that you did not intend to answer my letter. It was very bad of you to think so, and to have written only after listening to the advice of *Kum* Wierzba. My dear husband, I write to you with a good intention, without any wrath, and it seems to me that you will agree with me. Answer me whether I don't write the truth, my dear husband, that you ought to answer without hesitation every letter, good or bad . . . . and that you ought to accept everything from me, whether it is written good or bad [praise or blame], and I must also accept from you good and bad writing. We must listen to each other in order that it may be well, until we are united with each other, for I wish our life to be happy as long as we live upon the world. And don't listen to any Hams whatever they may tell you against me, or to any apes, whatever they may write you in their letters about me. And if anything comes to your ears about me, write me at once and I will listen to you and won't be angry at all if you make any remark to me. For I don't

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED FATHER: I am in good health, thanks to God, and I wish you the same with my whole heart and my whole soul. Now, dear father, I have mended everybody's shoes, and after calculation it amounts to 1 rouble, 50 copecks, and I have calculated everything twice cheaper than a shoemaker would take. So I beg you, dear father, send me either in a letter 2 dollar-notes, then mother would go to the bank and change them, give me 1 rouble 50 copecks and take the rest herself; or when you send money, send also these 1 r. 50 c. for me. . . . . I have nothing more to write only I kiss your dear hands and your dear head and your dear face heartily innumerable times, and once more I kiss you innumerable times. Goodbye, most beloved and dearest father. Written by your son, loving and never forgetting you, and wanting to see you and to kiss you as many times,

ALEKSANDER [OLEŚ] JABŁKOWSKI [12 or 13 years old]

637 April 18, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: [Long account of renovation of house and furniture.] As to Easter, I was in Rafałowa's home on Good Sunday, for she sent a girl asking us to come. On Monday I stayed at home and slept the whole afternoon, for now there are no holidays for me, nothing rejoices me at all. . . . . On Tuesday the Rafałs called on me, but I was going to night-work and they stayed only one hour and a half. I brought 5 bottles of beer and that was all. . . . . Nobody else comes to us and I go nowhere.[1] [Calculation of income and expenses.] Now again I must buy shoes for your mother, because she has already some patches upon hers and she begins to talk that she won't walk now any more in shoes with patches. I shall describe to you some day what she says, for she does not like to be with us. She wants us to give her the money back and she would rather be free. Yes, my dear husband. [Details about health.] Dear husband, you write me to go sometimes with the children to the high mass. In winter I never went, neither with them nor alone, for it was too cold. Now it is warmer, but I have not much to wear, and Mania has no summer overcoat, and now the weather is cold. . . . . My summer overcoat is quite worn and not nice enough to go to the church. Instead of putting anything whatever on myself, I prefer to stay at home, for

[1] Evidently the husband does not like her to have many social relations. The egotism of the marriage-group asserts itself even in this matter.

mending shoes. . . . . You would laugh to see how he mends and quarrels with his grandfather. For now your father is here and always interferes with Oleś, as he likes to interfere with everything, but Oleś does not allow him to tell him anything, saying, "How much do you know about it? I know myself what to do." Now, dear husband, as to the carbolic acid, you can be perfectly sure, for I have poured it out already. I give you my word of honor that I tell the truth; I used it only sometimes for my teeth. [Two pages describing her sickness; concern for her husband's health; hygienic advice.] So please care for yourself that you may come back in good health and looking well. I beg you once more, dear husband, care for your health, for I look bad now also after my sickness, and thus we might both get overworked, my dear husband, and during our work the grave might cover us and we might not rejoice with each other upon this white world. Yes, my dear and beloved husband.

Now as to Rafałowa, about my going there with my children. When I am there nobody else is there except Rafałowa and Mateusz and their children. She buys a small bottle of vodka and a bottle of beer, we put our money together [to buy it]. Oleś plays the accordeon a little; the children dance, we laugh at them, and thus a little time passes. Sometimes they come to me, also alone. But we don't meet so often; during the whole summer I was there 3 times and they were in my house 2 times. They are very polite toward us. This is the only defect, that they are not married and live so. They intend to marry, but they postpone it thus from day to day. . . . .

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

636 [March 22, 1914]

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED FATHER: I beg you very much, send me a cream-white ribbon of the same breadth as that one which you sent me for the holidays. Then I shall have a scarf for my dress for the first communion. I beg you very much, be so gracious and buy it and send it to me as soon as possible after you receive this letter. I beg you very much, and I kiss your hands, each finger, and each eye, and each ear, and your nose, and your chin, and your cheeks, and your neck [all the words in diminutive form], everywhere and everywhere, my diamond little father, who loves me. I am in good health, thanks to God, and then goodbye. Written by your loving daughter,

MARYSIA JABŁKOWSKA [10 years old]

Gud baj.

two postcards one after another. Therefore I write you a letter, dear husband, for I long very much without a letter. I have had no letter from you for 17 days. . . . . I was so anxious and nervous that it was awful, because now there is such trouble in America. I have read in the paper that 30 Americans were shot in Mexico, and many other things . . . . and that a ship was drowned which left America on April 7. . . . . So, my dear husband, I admonish you very much, if you intend to come from America sooner or later inform me exactly when you will leave. And then I shall write you to bring us some token from America. For if only things are bad in America, I beg you, come back. Now, dear husband, I dreamed that you returned home and came to me to the factory and I did not recognize you. It seemed to me that it was you, but I was not certain. And I asked the women, "Look there, this man is like my husband." And you went to the well for water. And Pazuchowa said, "Evidently, it is Konstanty." And you came back, carrying water, and entered into the room and kissed me and began to weep that I did not own you. And I told you nothing, because I was angry with you for not having written to me when you would come back, for I was pained that I had not met you at the railway-station. Then I awoke. So my dream was contrary [bad?], because I dreamed that you kissed me with your tongue.

Miecznik has quarreled with me. They are all mean, for they grudge this heavy work which I have. All this is through envy, for whenever money comes [from you], their eyes sally out of their heads from envy. For we have such luck that people grudge our work. In this quarrel with me he reproached me that I ought not to work, for you send me money from America.[1] He did not say this to my eyes [outright], only he said that I was working for the sake of distraction. We are 4 women who work together, as before. One of them remained at home, and Miecznik went at once to the master asking him to send a woman to us. The master refused, and the 3 of us worked until breakfast. After breakfast he went to the director and said that there were three of us and we could not get along, and the director sent another woman more. He was so mean because he did not want us to earn a złoty more, for he grudges, particularly me. I got very angry at these Hams, for I don't allow anybody to abuse me much

[1] It is traditionally not suitable to a man's dignity to let his wife do hired work and to a woman's dignity to do hired work if she has a husband.

at once some people would be found who would say that Jabłkowska walks in such a worn and out-of-fashion overcoat. So I prefer to stay at home, for we are everywhere talked about, that both the Jabłkowskis are clever and laborious people, that you are working in America and sending money which we put into the bank, that I am working, and Janek also, that we dress well and the children are nicely dressed. Thus, they say, clever people do.[1] Now, dear husband, I should like to buy a summer dress and a nice skirt and a nice overcoat, and also an overcoat for Mania. Now I must buy for Mania a white dress and slippers for Pentecost, because she is going to her first confession. My head aches with all this, that always something is needed. So, my dear husband, when you send money some day, if you send me 100 roubles and some more, I will buy something, but if you send only 100, I won't buy anything; I will sit at home and put those 100 roubles into the bank, because I want you to come back as soon as possible, for I worry much without you. Yes, my dear husband. . . . .

Dear husband, I ask you whether it is true that you have killed, in company with Wierzba, a pig, that Wierzba wrote thus. For once Kozak came to me when I was in the factory and asked: "Has *Kum* [your husband] written a letter now?" I say: "Why do you ask? He has." And he laughs: "And what does he write?" I say: "Nothing in particular. He is in good health, thanks to God. And what is the matter?" He says: "Nothing, only mine [my wife] said that Wierzba's wife said that Wierzba wrote that they killed a pig together." So I am curious, whether it is true, for even if you did it it is all right. [Usual ending.]

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

638 May 8, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: I received your postcard for which I thank you heartily. . . . . Now, dear husband, to this postcard I answer you by a letter, not by a postcard, because I wrote you a postcard on May 1, and I cannot send you thus one postcard after another, for it ought not to be done so. A postcard ought to be sent after a letter, and not

[1] Compare the high social standing of Jabłkowska with the case of Borkowska. The community dislikes and opposes the isolation and egotism of the marriage-group but must respect and acknowledge the superiority which solidarity and efficiency give to this group. The position of the latter is weaker than that of the large family-group, but incomparably stronger than that of an isolated individual.

knows what! That you were sick, or that you had got so indifferent. And I went to Syroka and said so: "Tell me my fortune from cards, *kuma*, whether my husband is healthy, for I have had no letter for a long time." And she laid the cards and said: "*Kum* is healthy and works, and during this week you will receive a letter with good news, and a big sum of money is on the way, so don't grieve for on Sunday you will go [to the post-office] for money." And I said: "If your words prove true, *kuma*, I will treat you when the money comes." And thus it happened. I received your letter on Thursday and the post-notification about money on Monday, and I had to treat her. So when I returned from the town with Mania and Oleś, I brought a small bottle of spirits and *zakąska*, and we went to Syroka and drank it. . . . . And please answer me whether you are angry with me or not for having drunk this bottle with Syroka.

Dear husband, I write you a few words about this Wierzba's money. It is so, my dear husband: I don't wish *Kum* Wierzba to send money to my address. First, I don't wish to be at the service of Wierzba. Second, she will bear a savage claim, why Wierzba sends money to my address, not to hers. For even if I talk with her whenever it is necessary, I shall always remember those words which she threw against me unjustly. God is witness whether she was right! And so to speak, I don't wish to cause Wierzba this pain, for you live well with each other and it would not be suitable to offend him, for he is a very fine man. But she is an accomplished swine, although my *kuma*. So when this money comes, I shall draw it from the post-office and immediately there I shall give it to her. And I do it for you, dear husband, and for the *kum*, for he asks me politely. [Church-going; asks for prayer-books.]

[MARCYANNA]

640 March 28, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: [Easter wishes; money received and spent.] Now, dear husband, I write you a few words about Lucek [husband's brother] and his wife, for I was with them just now. Lucek began to abuse us, saying that we lacked confidence in them and were afraid to lend them some money. He was offended with you for not having written the letter to him, but having sent it in my letter, for I gave them this letter without the envelope, because I did not notice the inscription, "To be forwarded to Lucek" and tore the envelope. I did not give them the envelope therefore, but

and he cannot offend me in any other way, for I have my honor and I don't care about any conversations. So he was very loud-mouthed and said that I was too great a lady, that such a lady ought not to work in such a black factory room but to sit in her apartments. Yes, my dear husband. And I tell you that I will work only until you come, for it is a pity for [me to lose] my health working with such Hams. [Health details.] Now I write you a few words more about Oleś. He finished the school and we ought to think of his having some occupation. So decide, please, and write me . . . . what to do. He always dreams either about going to a drug-store and learning to be a salesman, or to a press, to be a printer. . . . .

[MARCYANNA]

639 May 26, 1914

DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . I received 100 roubles and put them into the bank, so now there are 700 roubles in the bank. . . . . And for my expenses I took a loan from the bank,[1] but I am not very much satisfied for I have taken the loan and have not bought everything which I needed. . . . . I only got angry in the worst way, nothing more. For if both of us had been here, we should sooner have given good advice to each other, what to do. So I took a loan of 40 roubles. . . . . And there was more trouble than money. It is happy that I know how to write and it makes no difference to me, because I had to sign 6 times. . . . . And those who cannot sign—what a shame it is! The official and the doorkeeper laugh at him. [Enumerates the expenses and describes the clothing bought, upon 4 pages; adds a detailed account.] Now, dear husband, this small bottle of vodka and the *zakąska* [relishes] which you find written upon the scrap, we drank it with Syroka's wife. I shall describe to you in what way. When I had no letter from you for so long a time . . . . I imagined God

[1] It would be less troublesome and less expensive to spend a part of these 100 roubles instead of taking a loan, for the interest, taxes, etc., on a loan amount to twice as much as the interest which she can get on her own money. But there is evidently a remainder of the old distinction between property as a fundamental, not purely economic category, and incomes and expenses. The loan is classed with the latter, and not related to the property. It is an exact parallel with the distinction between mortgage and ordinary debt. The latter, in the peasant's eyes, does not harm the property as such, only the income-and-expense system. The other point here is the predilection for a round sum; a hundred is an entity which would be damaged by subtracting anything from it. Cf. note 2, p. 410.

could not have acted otherwise myself, for it would not be nice of me, because Adam got muddy enough in walking with us, for it rained—God forbid! And we felt cold all of us. So we went to Adam's house and I bought a pint of vodka and a pound and a half of a good *zakąska* [probably ham and sausage] and 5 bottles of beer and rolls for 10 copecks, and I gave to the children 10 copecks each, and Mania asked me to buy oranges . . . . and all this cost me 2 roubles 15 copecks. [Enumerates on 3 pages various expenses and makes a general calculation.] So you can calculate, dear husband, whether I have calculated well. Perhaps I have made some mistakes, then write me; I won't be angry at all, for we ought precisely to control each other's expenses, for this is good order. . . . . I shall describe to you many other things, but in another letter. . . . . Answer me whether you are quite healthy for I dream often about you, and I shall describe to you how I dream about you. But you are always bad toward me in my dreams and I always cry awfully. . . . .

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

642 June 3, 1914

DEAREST FATHER: [Thanks for gifts; describes how he earned more money by working nights.] I put 10 roubles from this money aside and intended to add 10 roubles later on and to buy myself a black suit. But it happened otherwise. On Pentecost morning, coming from the post-office, I met Adam Jabłkowski and he asked me absolutely to come to him with mother in the afternoon. I did not want to go, but he began to talk, that we despise his house. So we went. We went, and he had said nothing, and we found a christening [of his child]. Adam's brother was to be his *kum*, but he did not come, and Adam asked me absolutely to be his child's godfather. I was not prepared and refused, but he begged me and mother, and I had to hold the child at the baptism, together with Majewska, whose husband had a cab. . . . . And on Monday we had a *poprawiny* [supper in celebration], and I spent 6 roubles of my money on the christening-festival and *poprawiny*. And to the 4 roubles which were left I added 2 roubles more and bought shoes. . . . . Now I will begin to work at night again and will buy a black suit. . . . . Then I will get 6 photographs in my summer suit and 6 in my black suit and I will send you one of each; you will see what suits I have and how I look now. . . . .

JAN JABŁKOWSKI

said that the letter was inclosed in mine. And why should we turn our heads [trouble ourselves] about the Luceks? We have enough of our own troubles. We should never come to an end with them. Lucek began at once to worry me, asking me to lend him 100 roubles nevertheless, even without your knowing it. I said that I positively would not lend without your knowing it. Lucek began to laugh at me, saying that I was afraid of you. And I said: "Yes, it is true, I am afraid. My husband wrote me that he confided everything to me but on the condition that I would not lend money to anybody, either of my family or of his own. I write to my husband about every rouble which I spend. I must listen to my husband and nobody else." I had to find an excuse for he worried me about this loan. He said that he will write a letter to you some day, but I don't know what about. He said that we shall still beg his favor some day. Is he our father or what else? Stupid Lucek! . . . .

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

641 April 7, 1914

BELOVED AND DEAR HUSBAND: . . . . I have already bought suits for the boys. But I feared to do it myself and Janek also. Janek said, "If some man were with us it would be better, for he would see how this suit looks, and whether it fits me well, for you, mother, won't know it as well." We had nobody to ask to go with us except Adam Jabłkowski. So we went to him and I said to him a few words and we went at once to the Jew, and Janek selected a suit which pleased him. . . . . The Jew asked 22 roubles for this suit; Adam offered him 10. The Jew said, "You are joking," and said, "21 roubles." Adam offered 11. The Jew bargained, saying that he could not give it away at such a price and asked 20. Then Adam told him to select another suit for Oleś, then we would come to an agreement on both together. So we selected a suit for Oleś from black cloth. . . . . It pleased Oleś and is nice enough. The Jew asked 20 roubles for both, and Adam offered 18. I did not bargain, for I did not feel quite well, only Adam. They agreed upon 20 roubles and I paid 20 roubles, 14 for Janek's and 6 for Oleś' suit. I did not expect that we should buy at such a price, for the stuff is better than in the old ones, although they cost more. [Enumerates other expenses.] Now, dear husband, when we bought the suit, Janek said, "Now, mother, let us take a drink on this occasion." Though I

this whole trouble. When Wierzba's wife told us nothing, and you were in such a wrath against me unjustly. Only don't be angry with me again for mentioning this, for I don't remember it any more [I have forgiven]. But when you ask me since what time I have been unwell, I write you the positive truth. If you had not asked me I would not have written at all. So it was, my dear husband, that I cried very much and could not eat and could not sleep, only grieved that you had so little confidence in me and listened to gossip. And I worked more than ever. [Describes her work; writes what the factory-doctor prescribed.] And the doctor told me that if I don't feel better, I must go to a specialist for women's diseases, and I should go and should not grudge the money, but, to tell the truth, dear husband, I am ashamed. . . . .

[MARCYANNA]

644 June 17, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: [Two pages describing receipt of a letter in a torn envelope and asking him not to send such thick letters because the post-officials think they contain money. Three pages itemizing expenditures, etc.] I write you a few words about Mania. Write a sheet to her and admonish her to be more polite and not to fight with Janek, for when he makes any remark to her and pushes her a little, she begins at once to cry awfully and jumps at him. Once he told her not to eat in the courtyard, for I worked at night, and she went into the courtyard with a pot [of food]. She did not listen, and he struck her a little on the face. She came immediately to me to the factory, weeping, and said that Janek had beaten her on the face. I got angry, went home and asked who was guilty. They told me so and so. Thus she had merited to be struck a little. I got angry and said that by the love of God I would write to you. And I must write because I have said so. Now write her not to cry thus about any trifle, for I tell you, dear husband, that she is such a weeper that it is awful. She cries about anything. When I have worked over night, I am unwilling to go anywhere, I lay down and tell her, "Mania, don't go anywhere into the field alone." Then she begins to weep at once saying that she is worried, and sometimes she listens, sometimes not, and does not tell me where she is going. And I am afraid, for now different accidents happen; I read in the paper what is going on in the world. Therefore I don't allow her to

643 June 7, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: [Letters delayed.] I write you a few words precisely about this christening in Adam's house. I am not satisfied with it at all, for I grudge these 6 roubles which we have spent, for each rouble is awfully necessary to me. But it was impossible to act otherwise for there would be more talking than all this is worth. For if he had said to Janek that it was a christening we should not have gone at all. But I cannot say that they have treated us badly—God forbid! They behaved very politely, for the christening was on Sunday, and on Monday *poprawiny* and we returned rather late on both evenings, about midnight, and he brought us home in a cab both times. I was there and Janek and Mania, while Oleś . . . . was in the country with his companion. [Describes with whom and how long he stayed; why she permitted him to go, etc.] And these Majewskis [Adam's friends] admired [wondered] that I am still so young and have such big and handsome and good children. And they wondered that Janek was going out with me; they said that another boy would not be willing. [Money-matters; choice of career for Oleś.]

Now, dear husband, I write you a few words, that Golasiowa has asked my pardon, for she was in Częstochowa [on a pilgrimage], and after this she came to me and began to cry and to beg my pardon, and she wanted to kiss my hand, but I did not allow her, and we kissed each other in the face. And she asked me to beg your pardon, that you might not be angry with her. Now I inform you, dear husband, what a misfortune befell Brzozowski. . . . . He went also to America and his wife died here . . . . and 4 small children remained. People wrote for him to come. Only don't be impressed with it, my dear husband, for we are in good health, thanks to God. If I am a little unwell, never mind, for I am not very sick either; I walk, I work, perhaps gradually this sickness will pass. I write you on a separate scrap what is the matter with me. [The scrap was probably destroyed by the sender of the letters.] And if I write you that she is dead, why, you don't need to grieve about anybody else except yourself and your family. So don't mind it much. I write you this news that you may know, for I am also curious when you write me anything like this. Now, dear husband, I write you about this sickness of mine, since what time I have not felt well. My dear husband [it has been] since you wrote me disagreeable letters about

these are angry that you send so much, for their wives write them that you send money and they do not. Petruniowa has only 100 roubles. Syroka said it herself, for I don't ask. . . . .

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

645 June 28, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: . . . . Your last letter was also half-opened and then sealed by the post. . . . . I inform you what a question I had with the factory-porter about that letter which, as I wrote you, was opened; I write it upon a scrap and when you read this scrap, burn it. Now I write you, dear husband, a few words about Oleś. . . . . He began to work in the same factory as Janek; instead of loafing about, let him rather work, then he will even eat better. For when he did nothing he ate little, for he had no time because of loafing. He has no hard work . . . . and earns 50 copecks. . . . . Mania passed the examination to the second division, but her certificate is not very good; she is so unwilling to learn that it is awful. [Six pages of money-accounts; 2 pages of health; usual ending.]

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

Now, dear husband, I write you a few words about this porter. He has read my letter. I made him awfully ashamed and talked much [abused him] and said that he ought not to be curious to read my letters for I receive letters from my husband, and my husband writes his letters home and they are not interesting to him. This is fortunate, that he did not tell anything more to this———[illegible word, probably a contemptful term for a woman about whose husband Jabłkowski wrote something bad] except that———[her husband?] suffers such misery. He [the porter] told her that I had read this aloud in the factory. And I, far from reading your letters to anybody, don't even tell what you wrote. I guessed at once that he had read my letter and said to him: "How did you dare to read my letter and moreover to spread gossip among the women?" . . . . He excused himself and said that he will not do it any more. So I beg you, if you write anything bad about anybody, send this letter registered. . . . .

646 July 5, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: . . . . I received from you money, 110 roubles . . . . only I am very anxious why I have got no letter. . . . . The porter went to the country for a few days,

go alone into the field. But she says: "When the boys go out you are not angry." And I say: "It is permitted to the boys, for they are boys, and you are a girl, you ought not to walk alone." So, my dear husband, admonish her always, perhaps then she will sooner listen, for this crying of hers angers me awfully. More than once I got so angry that I had to strike her, but I should prefer to have her listen to me when I tell her anything, rather than to beat her, for it is not a pleasure to beat a child. . . . .

Now, dear husband, I write you about Oleś, that he finished his school and received a very good certificate . . . . nothing but fives and two fours [5 is the highest mark]. He received a book as reward for having learned well. This book costs perhaps 2 roubles, but unhappily it is Russian. When he was leaving the teacher kissed him on the head and said that he would try perhaps to get a job for him. And Oleś came home and said: "Well, mother, give me a few copecks for having passed the examination." And he was so glad that he had passed it! I kissed him and gave him only 15 copecks, for I had little money, but he was glad even thus, went at once and hired a bicycle and took a ride. And you, dear husband, when you send money, set aside a rouble or a half for him, for his having passed the examination; then he will be glad. . . . . He wants to go to the country for a week. I permit him; let him rest a little. [Relates how she tried to get a job for him at once.] Now, dear husband, I write you a few words about *Kum* Wierzba and this pig. You ought to have known yourself that you are not in your own home but with strangers, and that this does not pay; for you write that it did not pay. Nowadays nobody is ever to be believed. When I hear [read] what you write I say [to myself] that I did not expect anything like this from Wierzba—that you would not come to an understanding. But such are the times today. Describe to me everything you had between yourselves [the whole quarrel]. But I would beg you, dear husband, not to quarrel. Let him manage his own pocket and not profit from you. And don't ever hasten to such common undertakings. Yes, my dear husband. But it is always more pleasant to have somebody to talk with. Manage things as your reason advises you, that it may be well. Don't have any common undertakings and don't quarrel with each other. . . . . Now, dear husband, as to Syroka, don't fear that I tell anything there. I only listen to what she tells me and I laugh, for she says that those two [women] are very angry because you send 100 roubles every two months, and they write to their husbands, and

he says that he is ashamed that I am working. He has talked so for a year. And more than once he gets angry, particularly if I am sick. Now also he has talked much when he read this letter saying that you don't allow me to go to work. I did not want him to read this letter and I hid it in a drawer, but he found it. And they all began to clamor: "Mother won't work any more, father writes well; enough of this work." And Janek said: "Father writes you not to work, and you don't listen." And he talked much, and said that if I work he won't give me all his money, only 4 roubles [on each pay day]. But he has said so more than once, and still I work and he gives me his money. So I write you thus, dear husband. I should like myself not to work any more, for you know that people often abuse those women who work in the factory. Even now more than one tell [bad things] about Parzuchowa and Piotrowska, because they are so hot tempered. And people say: "Jabłkowska alone is an orderly [good] woman, and it is a pity for her to work here with them." But I should like to help you still to put these 1,000 roubles aside, as you desire yourself. So if I work for some time still it is some help for you, because I have fuel and a few roubles for living, and the expense is big, for everybody wants to dress and to eat well, and here everything is expensive. Yes, my dear husband. You see, we still lack 200 roubles. So I will work for some time still, we shall put it aside sooner. And I should like you to come back at last, for I am tired already with all this. I don't promise you to work for a long time, only till you come back. Yes, my dear husband. Now you write me not to go to work and not to do anything [at home], for there are people to do the work for me. Well, bad is my "ladyship" now. When you come, then I shall be a lady [do no housework]. But now grandmothers want to be ladies. Well, my mother may be excused sometimes, for she is right when she complains that [your mother] does not want to help her to do anything in the kitchen.[1] When we drink tea in the evening your mother takes her own pot and washes it, but leaves the glasses from which I and the children drank. And it is always so. I don't say anything until you come back; let all this go on, for it is nearer than farther [nearer to the end than to the beginning]. And she always holds up her nose saying that she gave her money here, that she is not here from pity. If there is sometimes

[1] Both the grandmothers are kept in the home, the wife's in return for doing the housework, and the husband's in return for money lent. The latter, therefore, does not feel obliged to help with the work.

and the doorkeeper who took his place may have opened and read it from curiosity. . . . . For some people lie in wait for these letters like dogs, because they can learn nothing from me. Other men who are in America don't send so much money, so they are curious why you send so often. Parzuch has sent only 200 roubles, a watch and a pin during a year. . . . . Now, dear husband, I inform you what I did with this money for I have no letter and I don't know your decision. . . . . I asked you for 120, but evidently you could not; nothing can be done. . . . . I put 100 roubles into the bank, and we have there already 800. . . . .

Oleś is still working in the factory. . . . . I shall write you when he gets some other job. Only I beg you, dear husband, write Oleś a few words and tell him to listen to me, for when he goes to the town and I tell him to be back at such a time for dinner, he does not listen; twice already he has not been in time for dinner. And he smokes cigarettes secretly. He kept company with Lutek. I abused him, and he got a little away from Lutek, but now again he walks [associates] with Stadolak. I am not satisfied with it, for the boy is not orderly; I don't need to explain much, but [the fact is that] he is not orderly and everything pleases him. Therefore I don't want Oleś to walk with him. [Oleś] had a good companion, but he is now with his father in the country. [News about poultry; 2 pages about her health.] So I must go to a specialist for women's diseases, but for me it is a great shame, for, as you know, up to the present I have never known such a doctor, and it makes a terrible impression upon me. Stanisławowa was sick and went to such a doctor, and she told me that there is a sofa and he orders to lie down and puts his hand inside, for he must inspect. . . . . But you know me [and you understand] that it is for me fearful and disgusting. . . . .[1]

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

647 July 22, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: [Letter received; thanks for a prayer-book; health.] As to my not going to work, don't write me anything about it and don't stir up Janek still more, for even now I must dispute with him. He does not want me to work,

[1] The attitude of the peasant woman on this point is even more extreme. Not only is the idea of medical inspection revolting, but she would not venture to write of it to her husband.

get even a letter. But nothing can be done, we must comply with God's will, we must bear steadfastly everything. Pray to God that He may keep us all in good health, and you, my dear husband, remember about your health and be steadfast, don't grieve about us. Why, we are not alone, whatever happens to everybody else here will happen also to us. And I write you once more and beg you, dear husband, don't grieve, that you may not fall sick, for you know very well that I want to see you, and the children want it also. Yes, my dear husband, pray only to the Holiest Mother to care for us and to defend us, and don't grieve so, dear husband. For when I received the postcard with your last farewell, I fell upon my knees before the image of God's Mother and, crying, I prayed to God and to God's Mother to guard you from any misfortune, as well as our children and our parents. And you see that up to the present God keeps us in His care and in health, so He won't leave us further on. Dear husband, be steadfast and work happily with God, and care for yourself and don't forget us. . . . . And I beg you, dear husband, don't send any money at all . . . . although I wrote you in my preceding letter for money. . . . . Now I receive a few roubles from the bank every week. . . . . I have taken already 40 roubles. Yes, dear husband, there is no work, and living must be bought. . . . . If we had no money in the bank, we should perhaps die from hunger, for it would be impossible even to borrow. . . . . Our bad enemies rejoiced [thinking] that when there is no work and I take the money from the bank they would come surely and rob me of the money. But I went to the cashier and asked him what to do, whether I should take money from the bank. But he reprimanded me and said, God forbid me to take money, for some misfortune might befall me. He said that the money in the bank will never be lost. . . . . So I write you, dear husband, don't grieve about our money, for not we alone have those few hundred roubles. People from the high sphere have thousands and they don't get it all, only a few roubles at once. . . . . So don't send me any money, put it into the bank, don't keep it with you, so that somebody may not take it. And keep the bank book carefully. Care for your labor's fruit, dear husband, for you work hard. . . . . Don't be angry with me, dear husband, for not sending you any money-accounts, but I have not a calm head. . . . . And if sometimes letters don't reach you and you have no news from us, I beg you for God's sake, don't grieve, only pray to God for patience

something worse at dinner, they all know how to be squeamish—the children, particularly Janek and Oleś, and your mother also lets her nose fall. I don't wonder at the children . . . . but your mother wants to be a lady. Now she does not know herself how to walk [she is so proud]. If you were at home you would laugh. And she always reproaches us about this money, saying that we have risen to our feet for her money. And she says that she ought to have interest on these 300 roubles. And she does not like to be with us; she wants only to have those 300 roubles back, and she does not know herself how to tear this money away. For once she said that Tomaszewski wanted her to lend him 300 roubles and promised her to take her to his home. Then again she said that Antek wants to borrow this money and will give a big interest. But I say so: I won't lend until you come back, and then it will be as you do. And she is tired of staying with us, she wants to go to Józef. She was always calling on Kasia, until once they almost fought about this money. For she [your mother] said that she had lost her money. And she [Kasia] said: "Where do you have your money? Why have you given me nothing." And so always. Once she began to reproach me about this money, and I told her to be silent, when you come, you will give her these 300 roubles back and let her go wherever she will be better off. And she said: "What does it matter if I have 300 roubles? And where is my interest?" And she said that you went to America on her money, and that money makes money.[1] And thus, dear husband. But she has got calmer since I told her that you will pay her back and now she says nothing, only that if she doesn't stay with us she will go to Józef. Only I beg you very much, don't be angry, for I write to you as to my husband, for I have nobody to talk to. [Four pages about Oleś' apprenticeship in a jeweler's shop.]

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

648 August 28, 1914

DEAREST AND MOST BELOVED HUSBAND: . . . . I thank you once more [for the letters] for I don't know what will be our further destiny. Perhaps because of this trouble [war] it will be difficult to

[1] She gets her living instead of interest and this is three or four times as much as the money would bring in cash. But the mother retains the attitude of the peasant, with whom the lending of money is not considered as a purely economic investment but as a personal help to be subjectively appreciated.

PERSONAL RELATIONS OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

We have seen that the familial and communal system of life does not leave much place for relations of individual friendship and love. The closeness of friendship is determined by the strength of social, objective bonds which exist between the individuals, and not by their personal affinity. Friends are, first of all, members of the family, then any inhabitants of the village, parish, community. Of course there is some liberty of individual selection, but only in so far as it does not interfere with the recognized objective bonds. The subject can be in a closer friendship with one inhabitant of his village than with another, or with one cousin than with another, but he has no right to prefer a cousin to a brother, an unrelated inhabitant of his village to a cousin, a member of another community to a member of his own community, a foreigner to a Pole. Since, evidently, such norms seldom completely determined the real conduct, we find the interesting fact that in all cases where individual preference is not based upon the objective bonds certain other social bonds are substituted to justify it, and assume thus a social importance which they would hardly attain otherwise. Here belongs, first of all, the god-relation. A *kum* is equivalent to a relative, under the pretext that it is spiritual relationship. Therefore, a man who has a close friend sanctions this friendship by asking him to be his *kum* or by holding his child at baptism. He then has the right to prefer him to his real relatives. Another objective bond used to justify friendship is that between a *swat* (matchmaker) and the bride, the groom, or their parents. If neither of these social bonds is available, there remains the

and health, and I must be patient here also with our children. . . . . Goodbye, my dear and beloved husband. Be calm about us, I beg you very much, dear husband. Don't lose your courage, comply with God's will, and I and our children we must also comply with God's will, since we have lived to see such things.[1] I kiss you and I press you in my embrace, and I kiss your face, the dearest one for me. And once more I kiss you heartily, my dear husband.

Your wife, always well-wishing and loving you,

MARCYANNA JABŁKOWSKA

[1] Compare the fortitude of this letter with that in Starkiewicz series, No. 525, Kluch series, No. 532, and Porzycki series, No. 627.

HEJMEJ SERIES

It will be noted that each letter is from a different person and shows a different kind of relation. They are from (1) cousin and friend, (2) sister, (3) mayor of the commune, (4) a Jew, (5) father. All these relations are here still typical for the primitive social organization of peasant life; no evolution toward the modern individualistic form is manifested.

649–53, TO WOJCIECH HEJMEJ, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS AND FRIENDS, IN POLAND

649 MOKRAWIEŚ, 1913

DEAR WOJCIECH: [Usual beginning; health and success.] You ask how I am getting on with my work. You can know yourself, that formerly there were two of us and now I am alone, so more than once I have to do without breakfast or even dispense with dinner, because there is no time to eat. You ask about your wife, but I don't know anything. I have been there often, every second or third day, but I don't see anything [wrong]; I see only that she bought one calf and put another to suckle, and is managing [the farm-work] well. If she buys sometimes a pound or two of flour, don't be angry, because now everybody buys; you know well how the grain is now, that it is impossible to bake any bread without buying flour [and mixing it with the homemade flour]. It is not well to believe everything that people say, for you would never come to the truth by this way. At present there are people who write even if they did not see [anything bad], while they ought to think well before they begin to write without knowing the thing with certainty. And then you are tormented without need, because you cannot learn [the truth] exactly at once, for it is far away. You ask what people say about you. Nobody says anything, and your parents-in-law don't say anything bad either. And as to myself, since I undertook this work, I must do it, although it is very hard . . . . you are to understand, that I do it only for your sake. [Weather.]

weakest and least recognized one, companionship in some social activity—school, military service, work. Perhaps the frequent endeavor to have a friend marry one's relative is in a large measure due to the desire to sanction the friendship by a familial relation.

Naturally, when the family dissolves, personal friendship assumes a greater independence. But again, as we have seen, the constitution of a strong marriage-group puts new hindrances in its way. (Cf. Jabłkowski series.) Thus it seems that free friendship is limited socially to the intermediary period between the dissolution of the old family and the constitution of the independent marriage-group. Individually the only favorable time for it is the time before marriage, and sometimes there are friendships in old age, after retiring from the active family life.

As to love, we know that it is always, in the traditional organization, related to the question of marriage, and since marriage is a familial matter, love remains subordinated to familial considerations and to the control of the community. Here again a partial dissolution of the family and, moreover, a disintegration of the forms of social control are necessary in order to make place for a free individual relation which may last for a certain time before culminating in marriage. And, of course, a certain degree of individual culture is also indispensable to make this relation interesting in itself.

The following series do not lend themselves to a systematic arrangement, but we place first the cases in which the personal relations are still somewhat under the influence of the traditional attitudes.

neither son-in-law nor daughter! It was some thief. Only he must have learned somewhere what he knew—that our Kaśka is in New York and Paszon's Halka in Cleveland. Paszon did not even have the money but borrowed it and gave it to such a thief. . . . .[1]

And now the price of vodka has gone up here to 1 crown 20 hellers for a liter, and formerly, as you know, it was 40 cents [80 hellers]. And there are much fewer taverns than formerly, and now it is no longer called a tavern, but a *consens*, as formerly *propinacya*. And therefore they have imposed higher taxes, and whoever makes anything, either tailor or shoemaker or blacksmith or potter, when he wants to work must have a trade-permission which costs up to 30 gulden or 60 crowns. And whoever does not pay, all his tools are taken away from him, and a constable with a mayor goes to him and he can make nothing until he has paid the tax. Such a misery is now here, in this poor Galicia. . . . .

Your sister,

ROZALIA HEJMEJ

651 January 22, 1914

RESPECTED WOJCIECH: We speak to you these words: "Praised be Jesus Christus, born of the Holiest Virgin Mary" [rhymed].

Dear Wojciech, we write to you this letter and we ask you about your dear health and success. As to us all in the commune, we are in good health, except Michał Bodziony who is ill, and our success is as usual in Mokrawieś.

Now we inform you that we received your letter for which we are very glad in the whole community, and we thank you for writing to us. Dear Wojciech, we inform you that winter is severe in our country, severe cold and enough of snow-hills, for we cannot go through by any way. Now we inform you that we divided the birchwood near

[1] The credulity of the old man, so contrary to the usual suspiciousness of the peasant, is due to the revolution which American emigration has brought into the peasant life. While in normal condition a marriage of the daughter without the parents' knowledge and with a man absolutely unknown would be impossible, everything seems possible in America. As we have said elsewhere, the peasant's ideas and prepossessions are so completely adapted to his normal conditions of life, that once outside of these conditions he loses all feeling of proportion, all appreciation of probability and improbability. Extremely difficult to cheat within the sphere of his habitual acts and conceptions, he becomes the prey of any stupid combination when he can no longer apply his usual criteria.

I don't have anything more to write you, dear Wojtuś, because I don't want to write you lies and don't want to invent, and I don't know anything bad. When I don't know anything with certainty, I don't believe anybody; but here I did not even hear anything from anybody. . . . .[1]

FRANCISZEK WITKOWSKI

650 December 28, 1913

"Praised be Jesus Christus!" . . . .

Now, dear brother, I thank you for the letter and for these 100 crowns which you sent us We were very glad because they will be very useful to us now. This year was very wet and all the grain got rotten in the field . . . . and there is a great misery among us. And now we inform you, dear brother, that on Christmas we had a nice young man from America! He came with our father when he was returning from Nowy Sącz, and he said that he married Kaśka in New York, that she came with him and is now in Stary Sącz, and brings a big trunk which they cannot lift, and there are 60 crowns to be paid for it, and she has no change, only a whole 3,000, and nobody in the town can change it. But our father did not want to give him [money] nor to believe him, but said: "Come here both of you. Then we will go for this trunk and pay for it." Then he went, saying that he would bring Kaśka. But he did not go to Sącz, only to the house of Paszon in Osowo, and there told him the same—that he married Paszon's daughter Halka in Cleveland in America, that he is his son-in-law. Paszon drew the money out and gave it him. He took it and went. Paszon waited one day, two days, three days—

[1] The friendship between Hejmej and Witkowski is certainly based upon some kind of relationship, probably cousinship; the allusions to common work prove that there was also some business-partnership, perhaps renting of land. The relation is close enough to involve some sacrifice and interference with the marriage-group. The control which Hejmej exerts upon his wife through his relatives and friends is not an isolated case; we have seen other instances of it. It does not mean that the relation between the husband and the controlling friend is closer than that between the husband and the wife, but merely that since marriage is a familial and social matter, the conjugal relation can be controlled by any member of the family or community, even spontaneously, the more so when in the name of the husband. The friend acts as substitute of the husband and representative of the group. And accordingly the husband never asks that the side of his wife's life be controlled which is reserved for conjugal privacy and has not a social character, i.e., sexual fidelity. There is gossip, of course, when a break of fidelity is suspected, but only because such a break brings the sexual problem out of the sphere of conjugal privacy.

There is nothing new. As to weddings . . . . we covered [with a veil = married] today the daughter of Kacola from Mośkówka. We have a new priest. And there is nothing more of interest to write. We have very nice crops, and harvest is beginning. And I inform you that I received 120 crowns by money-order from you on July 15, for which I thank you heartily. And there is great heat in our country. And you ask why I did not want to accept 20 gulden from your wife. You ought to know yourself that she did not offer me any. If she had offered me, I would surely have accepted, even a single gulden, for who is the Jew who does not want money? And you write me not to give anything on credit [to your wife]. I don't want to give on credit much, and your wife owes me already for a shawl and for different smaller things. And if you send any money for me, send it to my address, it will be the best.[1] . . . . My wife greets you and thanks you for the letter that you wrote to us, and we beg you to write us more, whether your condition is getting better. And when you have money, send it to us, because we need it much and we have waited a long time. And when God grants you to come back to our country, then I will relate to you everything. And I write you that you have a nice daughter, because when there was a May-festival, she came to us for candies.

I finish this letter. Be healthy and please answer to your Jew who is very well-wishing for you.

KALMAN METZENDORF

Git baj [goodbye].

653 September 1, 1914

. . . . DEAR SON: . . . . Don't be angry with us for not having answered you at once, but we had no time at all. We managed as we could, because now it has been very narrow [much work] during the harvest and up to the present, because men have been taken to the army. And now we inform you that we gave Kaśka away [lost] for eternal times. But don't grieve, because she had suffered enough, poor girl. She was sick for more than a year, and so she knew so much [suffering] that she was weary of living upon the world. We

[1] This second expression of a lack of confidence does not necessarily mean more than that the woman does not usually occupy so consistently the familial point of view as the man and is more likely to yield to individual interests or to the temptation of the moment.

Wrzary, but not the pinewood, because winter interrupted us. As to Franek, up to the present, he manages well enough, and we don't know how it will be further. Now we inform you that Józek Hejmejak is getting married in Gostwina, in the house of Plata, and Wojtek Stawczak married Kubalanka, that one in the house of Jasiek Bodziony.

Dear Wojciech, we are glad that you intend to stay only long enough to pay back your worst debts. We all wish you it with our whole heart, may God the Holiest help you and grant you happiness, health and good success, that you may return sound to your native village, because although it seems that there is misery in the village, at least it is gay.

We end our words and we all, farmers and friends, greet you, together with our wives, most heartily innumerable times, and we wish you for this New Year happiness, health, fortune and after leaving this world a Heavenly crown [rhymed].

Now I greet you, Wojciech, I, son of Maciuś from Rogi, i.e., the Mayor, and I greet you also heartily, I, the Mayor's wife, i.e., Zwolińska. Now I greet you, Wojtuś, I, Jan Hejmej, very heartily. Be healthy, dear Wojciech, until we see you again. May God grant it.[1]

Yours forever well-wishing,

JAN ZWOLIŃSKI, *Mayor*

I signed,

J[AN] H[EJMJ]

Our [J. H.'s?] grandmother greets you.

[Communal seal.]

652 WOJAKOWA, July 15, 1914

DEAR WOJCIECH: First I thank you for your letter which I received on July 2, and I thank you for remembering us. As to our health, about which you ask, it is as usual, and our success, as in Galicia; it cannot be praised, because in Galicia there has been always misery and there will be further misery. Money is always lacking.

[1] The letter is written in the name of the whole commune. In Galicia, where the commune is autonomous, it plays a much greater rôle than in Russian Poland, where it is controlled by the Russian government. We have no other example of such a letter, and probably in this case the fact that it was written is due to the familial relation between the secretary of the commune and Wojciech Hejmej. It is a very good manifestation of the attitude of the social community toward its individual member.

A typical situation, showing the persistence of the old attitudes in courtship. The girls in question evidently do not lack suitors, as they have two proposals within a short time from America. This, upon the ground of the familial psychology, explains the lack of encouragement of which Pedewski complains in his letters. At the same time Pedewski's own attitude is also characteristic. He wants to marry into the family, and it is for him a secondary matter which one of the sisters accepts him, though he shows a marked preference for one of them. His rival, although he asks explicitly for the favor of one of the sisters, puts the matter upon a familial basis.

654–56, FROM STANISŁAW PEDEWSKI AND BRONISŁAW KOWALSKI, IN AMERICA, TO THE FAMILY JAZOSKI AND TO OTHERS, IN POLAND

654 TITUSVILLE, PA., April 27, 1913

In the first words of my letter I speak to you, Julcia and Kostusia, with those godly words: "Praised be Jesus Christus."

Now I inform you about my success. Thanks to God, I am doing very well because there is sufficient work, and it will continue so in America, and bosses will go out to Castle Garden seeking workmen. Now I beg you to write me what is to be heard in the old country. And now I ask you what I am [what you take me for] and what is this you are speaking against me. I do not think that I have merited so badly. I never did you any harm. When I was at home, I would have given everything to you, even if you had asked for my blood. And now, when I wrote you a letter, you go about the village and you tell everybody that if it were not for your dislike of making something of nothing you would send it back to America. Was there something disagreeable in that letter? I do not know. See here, you know that I am such a man that if somebody turns me in any way, I go

inform you that she died on August 23, but don't grieve, dear son, for all this comes from God. When somebody said that your arm was torn away this poor girl wept so much because of you that we could not appease her in any way. When she was dying she asked about you, where you were, because she had already forgotten herself [her mind wandered]. So she asked where you were, and when we told her that you were in America, she said: "Then we shall not see each other any more." She kept her reason up to her death. But don't grieve, dear son, because she is happy already, since she died, for she won't have any more terror, while we don't know of what a death we shall perish [because of the war]. I don't write you any more about it, for you know better than we do, only I inform you that there is no man among us except the old ones; all the others went to the army. . . . . Now we beg you, answer us at once when you receive this letter, because we are curious where you find yourself. If you are getting on well, thank God, if badly, then it is the same as here.

We greet you, all of us, dear brother. Answer us at once in order that we may still read a letter from you. Don't be angry, dear brother, with me for having not written nicely, but all this is from grief. Amen.

[Your father,

HEJMEJ][1]

[1] Dictated by the father to the daughter.

in saloons. If they played in our country the whole village would listen. Dear companion, now that I am acquainted with America, for no money would I return to our country, because there on Sunday it is not so joyful as here every day. You ask me to inform you about your sister. What information can I give you? When your sister came, I saw her, but now we don't see each other. They are far from us. When I was there she said all was well, but now I don't know. And now, dear companion, you ask me to send you some gift, but I can send you nothing by letter. When somebody goes home, then I shall know what to send you, but now I don't know, because by letter nothing will arrive. And what you write about the Jazoskis, why should I write to them in vain? If I write they do as if they would not know me at all. Were it not for [a word erased] even now there would be nothing. Old [Jazoski] and Kostusia seem not to be acquainted with me. Well, I didn't expect it. I don't mind it very much, only it is painful. And now, my companion, I beg you to inform me what is the news with you and at the Jazoskis, and inform me what do they say about me, and how everything goes on in the country. Please write me everything that is to be heard and who are your companions, because you two will not remain companions for a long time. And say, what do the Jazoskis say about me, good or ill? I have nothing more to write, only I greet you and *gud baj* [goodbye].

STANISŁAW PEDEWSKI

And now I write to Franek Jazoski [brother of the girls]. I write to you, my companion, about my success. My success is pretty good, only it is terribly sad, there is not a single girl; boys alone. And so perhaps we shall soon see ourselves as brothers-in-law. Don't be in a hurry in coming to America before I come back.

My Julcia, I don't know if you will become my sister.

My dearest sister Kostusia, do you remember how we loved each other one Sunday? Why do you not answer me? Oh, how I like you, my Kostusia!

STANISŁAW PEDEWSKI

656 BAYONNA, June, 1913

In the first words of my letter I speak some words to Mr. and Mrs. Jazoski, and before all these godly words: "Praised be Jesus Christus," and I hope that you will answer me "For centuries of centuries. Amen."

there. You asked me to write. I wrote. But if you ladies are not quite satisfied with it, then I can do nothing more. I shall still find a girl for me. The reason of my writing is only the fact that I called so often upon you, Kostusia, that I considered your parents like my own. I always said that I must be a son-in-law of the Jazoskis. Although Julcia did not care for me, I said that if not her, I should marry Kostusia. But clearly you despise me, because Julcia turned up her nose at me too, when I was in the old country. [Unintelligible sentence.] But I do not care what people are saying and I do what I wish. And now, dear Julcia and Kostusia, don't mind about what I wrote; you answered me and so I write this letter. But as to the Michalskis [the girls who did the gossiping], I wish that as they have already become old they may further become public women, as a reward for this barking of theirs, for it is the Michalskis who barked all this. When Siembozak left they told him that you spoke badly about me, and Siembozak, when he came here, repeated it to me. And now, if you have the wish to come to me, write, but not directly, only after I send you a second letter, because I am going to another city and your letter will possibly not find me. I have nothing more to write, only I salute you and your parents. I hope to see you soon and happy in America.

STANISŁAW PE[DEWSKI]

[An unintelligible sentence follows.]

655 September 2, 1913

[Usual greetings to his friends Franciszek and Juliusz.] I got your letter for which I thank you heartily. And now, dear companion, you ask me about my success in America. Well, let God help you in our country, that you may do as well; then you would not lack anything. I do very well. In the beginning I was a little homesick, but now I have already forgotten about it. I have very good and easy work; I can say that I don't work at all, I only stand in an iron-foundry. I am working in a bolersap [boiler-shop]. I have 26 roubles wages weekly, counting in our country's money. Time goes on very quickly in America, you don't notice when the week is passed, and of money we have our pockets full. Three of us are here from one village, Siembozak, and Wojteczek Zegleniak. We have music every day. Wojteczek organized a quartet, taking besides himself a clarinet, an accordeon and a trumpet, and they play

KAZIMIERZ F. SERIES

This is the only case we have in which a girl plans to bring her betrothed to America, and we have never heard of a similar case. At any rate, a manor-servant like Kazimierz F., lacking strong familial consciousness and having the habit of dependence, would lend himself more readily to a situation of this kind than the farming peasant, with his characteristic pride in money matters. The girl who sent us the letters evidently felt some shame in doing so, as she had attempted to erase the phrases relating to the marriage question, as well as everything indicating a familiar relation. But the erasures are not complete and not systematic. A remnant of this feeling is left in the man also, but rather in the form of yielding to social opinion. (Cf. Nos. 659, 660.)

The girl married another man two years later, and Kazimierz came to America helped by his relatives. The girl's husband has read the letters, as it was he who sent them in her name. Clearly there is no retrospective jealousy, since he allowed her to keep them after the marriage.

657–60, FROM KAZIMIERZ F., IN POLAND, TO HIS BETROTHED, IN AMERICA

657 ŁAZY, October 10, 1910

DEAR MANIECZKA: I received the postcards from you on the way and also one from America. Pardon me, dear Manieczka for not having answered you at once, but I expected soon to have a letter [from you], but I have none and I am obliged to write. Dear Manieczka, don't believe that I forgot about you, or anything like this. No, I don't expect ever to forget you. If you knew how I am longing without you! Not a single hour passes without my thinking of you,

And now I speak to your daughters and sons and in general [*sic*] to Miss Konstancya. Very politely I beg you to excuse me for not writing for so long a time, but it was because I have the intention of returning to our country and then we shall speak together by words. And now I announce to Miss Konstancya and to Mr. and Mrs. Jazoski that I should be glad to live in the family Jazoski, but I do not know sufficiently if I can beg very politely Miss Konstancya to give me a good word, and also Mr. and Mrs. Jazoski, because I think now of returning soon to my country. That is the end of my letter. What more I have to write I shall do it in another letter, only I request you to answer me quickly. And now I have nothing more to write. [Usual greetings.]

BRONISŁAW KOWALSKI

I did not amuse myself at all. First, my head was turned with the military service, secondly, my thoughts fled after you, and nothing interests me, except the wish to come to you the soonest possible. . . . . You ask me for my photograph. Well, I will send you one, but . . . . later on, not now, for I look very bad; you know how I looked last year, and this year I am still worse ["you . . . . worse" erased]. As soon as I recover a little, I will think about it. . . . .

KAZIMIERZ

659 January 27, 1911

DEAR MANIECZKA: . . . . Your letter rejoiced me much, but not completely. For I expected that you would say something about the ship-ticket or that you would send me money for the journey, while you write me in a totally different way. You write me, dear Manieczka, that for America a man must be healthy and strong in order to earn. But how many people go to America, and everybody works and comes back healthy, and brings nice money with him besides. Why should it be the worst with me? Don't think, dear Manieczka, that I am so weak or sickly. Don't fear. It is not so bad. I was sick only before the [call to] military service, but now my illness is over, it is not so bad.[1] And it seems that in America I should not have more work than I must often work here in vain. You write me, dear Manieczka, that it is not worth while to come, for in 2 years the president will be elected. But do you think, dear Manieczka, that I would go there for some ten years? I should like to go for just two years, in order to earn a few roubles. Moreover, I should like to see something of the world, for today people say: "Don't try to be educated behind the stove." Moreover, I should like, dear Manieczka, to have a few roubles when we marry. If you have money, I must have some also, for it is not nice at all if the boy marries and has no money for what he needs to get married [wedding-expenses].

You see, dear Manieczka, such are my intentions, and it seems to me that you will agree with me. Dear Manieczka, I hope that you will certainly find some way, that I may be with you in America. I beg you for it very much, and I believe that you cannot refuse. . . . . Don't be anxious about my finding work. I shall find my way, and

[1] The illness was evidently caused intentionally, in order to avoid the military service.

not an evening passes without my remembering those moments which we spent in the garden every evening ["which . . . . evening" erased by the owner of the letters]. Don't forget about me, don't allow anybody to turn your head. Be true to me in America as [you were] in our country ["as . . . . country" erased]. You are for me ["You . . . . me" erased] the only one, and I ["and I" erased] ought to be also [the only one] for you. Dear Manieczka, such is my love for you ["such . . . . you" erased], that wherever I am, whether at some entertainment or in some conversation, I am always thinking ["always thinking" erased] about you. Yes, dear Manieczka, nothing interests me now any more. I think only of you, my thoughts fled with you. Dear Manieczka, on the following Sunday, October 23, I shall go to Turek [military call]. What will be the result for me, I don't know yet. As soon as I learn I will write you at once. I beg you for an answer. Write me how do you like America. Are you merry, have you already any job and how much do you earn ["job . . . . earn" erased]? Please write me . . . . about your journey, how long did you both go? Send me your photograph, only the soonest possible. I have now nothing more to write, only I send you salutations from [your?] parents. I send also salutations for your brother and sister-in-law, and for you, Manieczka, hearty greeting, a low bow, a kiss ["low . . . . kiss" erased] and a hearty hand shake. . . . . I wish you good success and [I add] the old Polish "God make you happy."

With respect,

I, your ["I, your" erased]

KAZIMIERZ

658 November 20, 1910

DEAR MERKA: [erased; probably because pet name for "Marya," "Manieczka."] I received your letter . . . . and I answer you at once. First I must write you about my military service, how I succeeded. I can now be happy. I don't know whether our Lord God guarded me or what else, but I was exempted. . . . . Don't be angry, dear Merka [erased], for my not having written to you anything from Turek, but I was not sure of your first address . . . . only now I can write to you more often ["I can . . . . often" erased]. I am very glad that you arrived so happily . . . . and that you got work at once. Dear Manieczka, I was about a month in Turek, but

ARCISZEWSKI SERIES

These letters, written by and addressed to various persons, have one common feature. They show a very general type of friendly relation among young boys of the present generation who have already dropped most of the traditional attitudes and feel rather free from familial rigorism, who are in a period of life when practical interests do not yet constitute the main aim of life, and who have neither tendencies to self-development nor social ideals. In these conditions, their main interest is amusement—dancing, flirting, merry conversations, etc. And this is also the basis of their friendship. An interesting point is that all three, at the period when these letters were written, have confronted for the first time different serious problems of life—Stefan, the problem of adaptation to American conditions; J. Wiater, that of military service; Borowski, the problems which the revolution of 1905 put before the Polish youth. And, as should be expected, all three of them react negatively. Wiater's reaction is rather normal, but Stefan shows a more than normal inaptitude for sentimental adaptation, while Borowski remains almost completely passive in the midst of powerful national and social movements.

The love-relation, which constituted so important a part of the content of the letters, has also the character of play. It is no longer a mere preparation for marriage, and not yet a serious matter in itself.

it will be good for us both some day. You know well my thoughts, my dear Mania, I don't need to write you much, for I think always one and the same. I would write you more, but I leave it for another time. . . . .

KAZIMIERZ

660 March 1, 1911

DEAR MANIECZKA: I received both your letters. . . . . After receiving the first I was somewhat grieved, but when I got the second I was relieved and very glad. Evidently you wanted only to frighten me with that first letter. But I did not lose hope even so, because I knew that you only feigned, that you wanted to convince yourself what thoughts I have. Dear Manieczka, don't think that I am also feigning like some clown. No, it is not so bad! I remember up to the present what we so often spoke about, and up to the present I keep the same line of conduct. Dear Manieczka, you write me that you intend to send me $50. I thank you very much. My father here will give me the rest. $50 would not be enough but I will try to get the remainder ["to send . . . . remainder" erased], so that I may have money enough for the journey and something left in America. Dear Manieczka, I beg you also, as soon as you get this letter, write me at once, that I may be sure how to manage. As to sending money [home], why are you so much disturbed, while I don't hear your father murmuring at all. If you are afraid people will talk too much about us in Łazy, I advise you to send the money to Lotka's address. She will go to Słupca to the post-office, will get it and nobody will know. I beg you, dear Manieczka, don't disappoint me, for I confide in you totally and I think that I can do so, that I don't err in this. . . . . Dear Manieczka, I won't write you any love-words about this. We will talk when we see each other in America. What is the use of scribbling this upon the paper? Nothing can result from it. But I give you my word of honor that all will be well. I beg you, dear Manieczka, for a speedy and good answer, that we may see each other the soonest possible. . . . .

KAZIMIERZ

in our country! I wish I could return home at once, because here I have nothing to do. Now, dear companion Czesio, please tell me what is the good news about yourself. Rumors have reached me that Helena got married, but I don't know with whom, whether with Kozak or with somebody else. Please write me whether there will be a call now, in March, to military service, or not, and whether any girls got married or not. With us now, on the 14th and 15th of February, terrible snows fell, so that it was impossible to crawl out from home.

I sent a letter to Miss Klimaszewska on February 24, but she has not yet answered me. I don't know what it means. It seems as if she did not know me, and as if she was afraid on that account. And perhaps Serafin saw her and did not allow her to send her address. In April, I think of going nearer to New York; perhaps there I shall learn something more.

Now I am complimenting [flirting] with Miss Szewczak. She lives not far from me, in Philadelphia. We write each other terrible [declarations of] love. She believes that I write all this in earnest. I request you, Czesio, send me the address of Julka Zaleska. I beg you, write to me what you hear about town, how the boys amuse themselves there. Because when I recall those plays, how often we amused ourselves together, tears stand in my eyes. Please tell me what is to be heard with us at home [what is the news]. Once more I ask you, what about Helena, how does she do, whether her success [with boys] is good or bad, and how many amusements [dances] there were. Here I was at two dances and was lucky enough at them. End.

My lowest bow to all our acquaintances, to Miss Piotrowska and Miss Bojarska.

I remain, truly well-wishing, yours. I kiss you.

STEFAN

663 [1914]

RESPECTED COMPANION: . . . . Now dear companion, I am writing you a second letter and I have no answer to my first, so I don't know how it is with you and in our country. Here with us it is very sad. I am without work and Michał also works irregularly, because factories are closed. I have received a letter from Kostek and Paweł. They have no work. Kostek has not worked for 6 weeks and Paweł for 12. And so it is very bad with us, I don't know

661–65, FROM STEFAN ARCISZEWSKI, IN AMERICA, TO FRIENDS, IN POLAND, AND TWO LETTERS (664, 665) REPRESENTING THE SAME TYPE OF ATTITUDES IN OTHER BOYS

661 BREMEN, November 28 [1913]

[Greetings and wishes.]

DEAR COMPANION: I inform you about my health and success. I am in good health, which I wish to you also with all my heart. Now, dear companion, Czesio, I am now near the sea, in Bremen; the city is so called. I got over the frontier all right, and from Iłłowo also I got on well enough, and I don't know how it will be from now on. Dear companion Czesio, please write me the news about yourself. As to me, I am very sad here. And I request you, dear companion, learn how my betrothed, Miss Helena is behaving, whether she is pining or not. I beg you, my companion, write me about her, because I am very sad without her. You know well that I love her. But no matter, the dog may have her. [I don't care.] When you write to me, get her address, and I request you, dear companion, send me the address of Miss Zaleska. I beg you once more, dear companion, let me know how Helena is behaving. I request you, Czesio, write to me whether she wept or not after my departure. I have nothing more to write, but only I send you, dear companion, and to all my acquaintances, the lowest bow.

I, truly well-wishing,

STEFAN ARCISZEWSKI

662 AMSTERDAM, N.Y., March 2, 1914

RESPECTED COMPANION: Since the moment we parted, I have received one letter and have no tidings since. I came to this massive, golden whore [America], but I feel terribly sad, because here if you have no money, "Don't put your nose" [anywhere]. I am sitting without work and I don't know what will happen, whether things will get better or not. A terribly great number of people walk about without work. Now, before *Zapusty* [last six days before Lent] they go and break railway-cars, because they have nothing to eat. Michał works a little, but I cannot get work. What is the news in our country? Is there any probability of war? For here it is heard that in our country there will be war. If only there were a change

As to the lots, I drew No. 51 and I am received into the army. . . . . Know it, dear companion, that if I had not to go to the army I should not hold out at home; there are no companions, nowhere to go. Our Gorzków has quite declined.[1] But what a girl I have found now! I will write you in another letter, for I don't know yet whether she will wait for me [until my return from the army].

[Enumerates those taken into the army and those exempted.] We shall have still 9 days for revelry at home, and then to Chełm. [Enumerates the marriages and betrothals.] People marry, dog's blood! [*Psiakrew*, popular oath.] And I shall also have a wedding in Chełm, but with the accursed *Kacap* [nickname for "Russian"]. Send me to the army 10 gallons of whiskey. I will feed these Moscovites so that cholera will take them! Pardon me, dear companion, for writing you in such an ugly way, but the devils almost take me [I am furious]. Why should I serve these whores' sons? Dam it.[2] . . . .

I wish you every good with my whole heart.

Yours,

JAN WIATER

665 PRZASNYSZ, October 12, 1906

DEAR STAŚ: I begin this letter with the words, "Praised be Jesus Christus," and surely, were it not for the far space which does not let me hear your answer, I should hear, "In centuries of centuries. Amen." . . . .

I have been working for two months in a notary's office. I have had not much work up to the present, but although I have a little free time I cannot enjoy evening walks as during your presence here, for there is a state of war and it is forbidden to walk without a lantern and a passport. There are patrols upon the street who arrest those who walk without lanterns. . . . . I do it and I succeed. Terrible things are going on in our country, beyond description. In Warsaw nothing but bombs and brownings. . . . . Constables are

[1] It is an evident sign of the decline of the old territorial group when young people need the attraction of companionship and amusements in order to stay at home. This decline is one of the factors making emigration so easy and is itself hastened by emigration.

[2] The hate of the Russians is particularly strong among the peasants of this province, which suffered a very violent religious persecution during the second half of the nineteenth century. It was mainly inhabited by Uniates.

what will happen; bad times are coming. Now, dear Czesio, I beg you, describe what is the news about yourself, because I am curious. If I had not listened to my mother I should have earned more. Mother wanted me to go to America, and I didn't want to go. If I had not come, I should have done better. I didn't intend to come to America before spring and now here it is very bad. Factories are stopped, there is no work. Now, dear companion Czesio, write to me about the girls, whether they long for me or not, because I am very curious. Tell me about them, and particularly about Miss Sobierajska. Is she longing for me or not? I beg you with all my heart. My best companion, I beg you now once more, Czesio, what success does my old girl have now in the carnival? If there are to be weddings, please inform me who has got married either near the barracks or in the town, or in the village among our acquaintances. Here I have no acquaintance, and therefore I am very sad and I long terribly for my native country.

Now, dear companion Czesio, I beg you, send me, if you can, some nice Polish recitals [poems for recital] and some new waltzes.

Lowest bow to you, Czesio. Lowest bow from Michał.

I, truly well-wishing,

STEFAN

Now, dear companion Czesio, please salute from me Miss Bronisława Piotroska, and all the girls with whom we are acquainted. Now, dear companion Czesio, you have no idea what a longing got me. I don't regret anything else, but only the carnival. Now in our country they will amuse and rejoice themselves, and myself, I am sitting here, as in a prison. If I had known it, I would never in the world have sacrificed myself and come to America.

Now, dear companion Czesio, lowest bow to yourself and to your sister and parents, and to Władysław and Franuś, and to all our acquaintances.

I, truly well-wishing, and loving you,

STEV ARTER

664 ZAMOSTEK, October 27, 1913

DEAREST COMPANION: First I thank you for your memory. . . . . I got your address from your brother Stanisław and I answer you. . . . . I have been at home for 6 weeks after coming from America.

KOWALSKI SERIES

This series is interesting in two respects: (1) The familial relation has degenerated to a mere business relation, so that the two letters from brother and sister-in-law can be used as typical examples of business letters. (2) Personal friendship has assumed the function traditionally performed by the familial relation; there is much more community of interests between Antoni Kowalski and Stanisław than between Antoni and his brother, and much more real affection. Stanisław is, indeed, a cousin of Antoni Kowalski, but by its personal character their connection is qualitatively different from traditional cousinship.

The evolution is probably due to the influence of the middle-class environment in Posen. The family is beginning to get into this class.

666–71, TO ANTONI KOWALSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS AND A FRIEND, IN POLAND

666 MIŁOSŁAW, June 15, 1913

DEAR BROTHER [-IN-LAW]: We received your letter . . . . but you wrote us so little. We don't know whether they inspected your things [baggage] or not, and how it was on the ship. Kazimierz [husband of the writer] is still working in Nerengow, but he will have only four weeks more to work and he is afraid that after this he will have no work. . . . . Nothing worth writing has happened during this time. . . . . I thought that Kazimierz would think more about everything and would exert himself more [with regard to their common property] when you, Antoni, were not here. But now, just as before, he does not think anything beforehand and he has not done anything yet, because when he comes late, he says that he won't. It was I who painted the door, and everything that was left [I did]. Nobody has bought the table yet . . . . and the wheel [?]. Now times are hard and everybody does without. And Kazimierz goes

killed, as well as the bigger fishes. . . . . Not long ago our military governor was killed. In Łódź there is a general strike and court-martial. Every day a few men are hung or shot. The prisons are overfilled. . . . . In our town a school-association has been organized, but the Sokols have been dissolved by the government. . . . .

The girls look very well, particularly Walercia. Boleś K. preaches morals to her in a way which seems very pleasant for her. . . . . Polcia looks as you have never seen her—a dress two yards and a half, a hat three yards in circumference, and herself grown up, a yard and a half tall, and she dreams already about everything that is suitable. In general the girls are nice, but they will probably be obliged to hire us for talking, for they are eager to talk, and the boys won't. . . . . Walercia feels a terrible sympathy for you. And how is the matter with you? Inform me, for if you feel anything toward her I will try, for my friend's sake, to send Boleś away in some way; why should he spoil the matter? It seems to me that the thing ought to be taken up at once, for he tramples much around her. May he not succeed at last. . . . .

Your truly loving companion,

BOROWSKI

advise him. . . . . We had no time to ask your advice, and we did not think that the contract was already valid; we thought that it must still be approved by the court, and that up to that time it was possible to draw back. . . . . Since you went away we have been in a worse situation than in the year when we got married, because we had to pay all the expenses alone, and Kazimierz did not work in the winter and worked badly in the summer, ... and there is no other income. If I only could earn something! But in Miłosław there is nothing to be done; I will not go and steal from the forest. . . . .

Zosia Kupś got married in the winter. . . . . And Marynia is getting ready to go to the convent. She sends greetings to you and said that you caused her much grief . . . . but she is no longer angry. Perhaps you want to see the last of her; I have her photograph, taken not long ago . . . . so I send it to you . . . . but please send it back, because if I don't have it she can be angry with me for having sent it so far away. In a year she will certainly [she says], go to the convent, but I don't know whether it is not feigned. A man courted her lately, but she refused him. . . . . If you wish, write some words to Marynia; she will be glad, I think.[1]

KAZIMIERZ and WŁADYSŁAWA

668 PALCZYN, January 5, 1913

DEAR ANTONI: . . . . I ask you now whether you spent the holidays happily and gaily, and what served for amusement, cards or dances. But that is perhaps not fashionable in America. We played cards during both holidays, for what could we do? It rained and snowed—impossible to go anywhere. On the first day we could hardly get to Mr. Przybysz's to amuse ourselves a little there. It is a pity, dear Antoni, that you are not here. But nothing can be done. Perhaps we shall yet live together and amuse ourselves, as we did formerly. Lucyan came also for the holidays, but for 3 days only. We have amused ourselves for the last time in the house of the Przybyszs, because I must also inform you that poor Mr. Przybysz is very unfortunate. He has convulsions, and therefore he ceased to

[1] The romantic attachment here is completely different from what we find normally among peasants. No peasant girl would be heartbroken through the failure of the man for whom she cared to marry her, because no strong love can grow out of mere acquaintance on the basis of the traditional peasant attitude, unless it has terminated in sexual relations, and we have no ground to assume that this is the case here.

nowhere and speaks with nobody, so nobody knows; but perhaps somebody will yet happen [to buy them]. When anything new happens I will write. I urged Kazimierz to write, but the lazy fellow did not wish to do it; he preferred to read papers and told me to write. . . . .[1]

KAZIMIERZ and WŁADYSŁAWA [KOWALSKI]

667 March 15, 1914

DEAR BROTHER: . . . . Before all I must answer about this contract. You say that it is our own fault, for renting it. It is true. But if Kazimierz had looked into it himself and had relied upon nobody else, it would not be so bad. But he relied upon our uncle; he took uncle with him and was sure that everything was all right. But it is not as when you were here, Antoni, because you did [for us] as for yourself, and our uncle cannot know how it will fall out for us, whether good or bad. And then, all this was done without any reflection, because it was so: One afternoon Nowicki came with the Neumanns and asked whether we would not rent [the property], but [said] that they wanted absolutely to live in it themselves. But as the Maślińskis intended to move away we said to each other that it would be very well, since it happened that one person wanted to take it all [the whole place] and at least there would be no trouble with the lodgers. We were to reflect how to do, and they went away. In the evening they came back and said that it would be well to make the contract at once. . . . . Kazimierz went directly to our uncle in order to ask his advice, and took uncle with him and relied upon him entirely, thinking that when he looked into it everything would be all right. But with uncle it is not as with you; uncle does not mind much what is better and what worse for us. He knows only how to say [after the thing is done] what somebody did bad and what good. . . . . If Kazimierz had more thought about everything himself instead of looking to and relying upon other people, everything would have turned out differently, because nobody can advise him [properly] in everything; he alone can know everything himself, since he knows all his own conditions the best. . . . . He complains that you told him always to ask uncle's advice, and that uncle did not

[1] The complaint in this and the following letter of the negligent behavior of the husband is to be qualified by the fact that she addresses herself to the husband's brother and not to an outsider. Even so, it is not in accordance with the tradition.

to Janczak I see that you did not understand it well and that you are very angry. It is true it is too cheap, but they have it as they wished it. They thought only about America, and they did not think about reserving a lodging for themselves. Afterward they asked for the lodging upstairs, and the tenant allowed them to live there, but I think that it will not go well. My father advised them to ask 850 marks rent, but Kazimierz would have been glad to have even 600, and my father could not say anything against it, since he is neither a child nor a woman. But Kazimierz and his wife are not fit to manage this property. It would be the best to let them be simply lodgers, and to give them no right to dispose of it, because they don't do as they promised. He works, it is true, but his work amounts to nothing. [Detailed conditions of the rent-contract.]

Now I write you about our neighbors. Marynia Przybysz got married. The wedding was August 19. We were at the marriage-feast and had a pretty good time. There is nothing else new. Please write me how it is in America, whether you really do not like it, and whether you wish me to come and to earn well. But write me from your true heart. . . . .

STANISŁAW R.

670 November 19, 1913

DEAR FRIEND: With us everything is as from old. I would gladly go to you, but my father is opposed to it. He says that although I could get out, the Germans would afterward take my part [confiscate my fortune]. Even if I refused to be a German citizen it would not help. But no matter, let it be so till spring, and then I shall know how it will be with my military service. Lucyan says that it is not so bad in that nice army, but he says that he regrets those two years. He is getting on well; every four weeks he is at home. Last week we were in Cieśle at a wedding. Lucyanek was also there; he had a leave of 8 days. He butchered for the feast, and soon after he butchered also for another neighbor. He earned some money and amused himself. He would have been at the second wedding, but he had no leave for so long a time. The wedding was very nice, we amused ourselves "up to the ears." It lasted two days—time enough to dance. It was not as in Skotniki or with the Przybyszs, because while it was nice with the latter it was short; we could not amuse ourselves so well. . . . . It is sad among us; the dances are ended.

perform his [government?] service and must move away from here. So after the holidays I went with him to the house of Drzewiecki. He lives now quietly there. He is not so bad, but after these attacks he speaks wanderingly. It is a pity, because he was a good man; he wished nobody any wrong. Miss Bronia was also with the Przybyszs until Christmas, so I went there often and we amused ourselves nicely. But now all this has come to an end; Mr. Przybysz is in Miłosław, Bronia in Jaworów. It is a pity, for all is over.

Yesterday I was also with Kazimierz and his wife, and I saw at last that they had decided to answer your four letters—so they said. Isn't that a villany! When they want something they know how to write but when they have got what they want it is difficult for them to send you their note [promise to pay]. As if you did not figure in it at all! I told them it was not nice of them. Władzia answered that it was the affair of Kazimierz. But I said that they both deserved a good beating, because Kazimierz is an exceedingly negligent fellow, and she is such a bad "muzzle." But you know yourself, my dear, how it was; it is the same now. She read me your letter, and they said that you want a note from them but according to their calculation you still owe them 300 marks. But what is the need of those other expenses besides the new building? A nice administration is it not? Do as you will, but I tell you that you will never come to an understanding with them. When you were here you had trouble and grief more than once, and now they do as they please. If I were you, after receiving that note I would send them nothing, but I would demand the interest, and then we should see how it would go with them. As long as you associate with them you will never have money; you will work for the benefit of others. Evidently, it is not my affair, but as I promised you, I inform you. But please don't betray me, because Janczak lives in good friendship with them. . . . .

Your true and well-wishing friend,

STANISŁAW R.

669 October 10, 1913

[Greetings; generalities about health; letters written and received; harvest was good.] Now I write you about Kazimierz and his wife. As you know already, they rented that farm. For 10 years he [the tenant] will pay 700 marks yearly. My father assisted, so I inform you more exactly about it, because from what you wrote to them and

anything?" Father got so angry that he cursed her and swore at her, for you know how he can do it. Władzia fled. . . . . The next day K. went to a lawyer and told the whole matter. Neumann had already entered a suit on the ground of the invasion of his home. I don't know how it will end. I will write you more later. Neumann is a strong antagonist and it is a pity that you are not here; you would perhaps defeat him. . . . .[1] I called yesterday on Kazimierz, but I did not find him or his wife at home, but my aunt [mother of Antoni and Kazimierz] told me the whole affair and asked me to inform you. She said that she herself took the money for the holy mass [to the priest]. She said that with you she had it much better and that she does not like very much [to live with Kazimierz].

STANISŁAW R.

[1] This whole quarrel has probably also a racial background. Neumann is a German or of German extraction.

. . . . I live like Adam driven away from Paradise. I have few friends, so I don't know where to go. Sometimes I go to Janczak and we play the violin a little. As to those tenants, they are getting on badly. It seems to me that they will not remain for a long time. He paid little to Kazimierz, because his situation is bad. . . . . Now I ask you, dear Antoni, whether that gun has been of any use to you . . . . and whether that suit is fashionable now in America. . . . . Here it rains continually . . . . mud up to the knees. Frost and snow would be preferable; one could kill some game more easily. But the hares have all been shot, and there are very few deer. My shooting is bad this year. I have a bad gun. I miss yours. . . . .

STANISŁAW R.

671 April 6, 1914

DEAR FRIEND: First of all I wish you, dear friend, healthy and merry holidays. Perhaps you will spend better holidays than I here, and particularly Kazimierz, for an accident happened to him, because he is too good, and moreover a fool. On the first of the month he needed money. He went to his tenant, who owed him 350 marks of rent for half a year. But Neumann was not at home. He went on the 2d. Neumann was eating dinner and said that he must finish it. All this because he had no money. On the third day at 7 o'clock P.M. [Neumann] sent his servant-girl asking Kazimierz to come for the money. Kazimierz, as you know, is good natured. Though it was the duty of Neumann to bring him money, because the law is so, Kazimierz went for the money. Neumann put the money on the table and told him to take it. Kazimierz said: "I must first count it, whether there is enough." . . . . And K. counted the money. Suddenly N. seized him and pushed him away from the table. They began to push each other and suddenly N. seized a stick and wounded K. on the head badly enough. K. went bleeding to the doctor, and the next day also he wanted the doctor to come. So Władzia came here and related all this to my father. And father said: "You see, that is what you get for your kindness. Why did not Kazimierz take a chair and split his head? Moreover, what do you want? You wished to go to America, and now you complain [you were in a hurry to rent the house and to leave]." Then Władzia said: "You were present when we made the contract. Why did you not say

672–75, JAKÓB FRYZOWICZ, IN POLAND, TO A FRIEND, IN AMERICA. THE FRIEND IS ADDRESSED AS "BROTHER"; HE IS POSSIBLY A COUSIN

672 GOSTWICA, February 23, 1914

"Praised be Jesus Christus." . . . .

MY HEARTILY BELOVED BROTHER: [Greetings; wishes; letter received.] I love you also very much, because you are always well-wishing toward me. I remember the day of September 23, it was very sad for me, because on that day you left for America, and moreover you did not come to us to bid us goodbye. I had prepared something for you, in order to thank you for having always made things for me, without accepting any payment. I expected you to come on that day and I waited for you from morning till noon, and you did not come. I said: "Ah, perhaps he did not go today," and our host said: "He went probably, because I saw somebody going in a wagon, and two men following the wagon." I was afraid and ran to your house. I entered and asked your wife what was the news, and she said: "Well, there is the news that he went." And she said to me: "It is well that you came, because you will take your watch; he told me to take it directly to you." And so on the one hand, I was glad that I had the watch repaired, and on the other hand, I was very grieved that you did not come to us at least for half an hour to bid us farewell, because perhaps we shall see one another, and perhaps not. I thank you very nicely for this letter because I have expected it the whole time with great longing, and when I read it it seemed to me as if my health had increased. Because now, since Christmas, I have been seriously ill. I thought that I must die; my legs were so swollen that I could not move. . . . . Now I can walk with a stick . . . . and, thanks to our Lord God, I can sew already, a little sitting and a little standing. And now I thank you very much for wanting to give me that diamond for cutting glass, but it is no longer there, because somebody has stolen it from you. Our Jasiek went with your letter to your wife that she might believe that you want to give me this diamond indeed. She searched for it but she did not find it. Surely somebody has stolen it. This was a man without conscience. I thank you also very nicely for this panorama. I wished to give it back to your wife, but she said: "If he gave it to you, keep it." So

FRYZOWICZ SERIES

Type of sentimental friendship, rare among country people but found sometimes among town people of the handworker class. This form of sentimentality is probably due to the influence of religious life in towns—bigotry, ceremoniousness, fraternities with their superficial humanitarianism, complicated devotion, and lack of practical interests. At the same time the sedentary occupation favors reflective attitudes. Consequently among this class of people sentiment as such assumes a value which it never has among peasants, where it is immediately converted into a motive of action. The same can be said about intellectual life. An impersonal interest in the same phenomena is sufficient to create a communion between individuals, while among peasants there must be always a certain solidarity of personal interests to give rise to a friendship.

In the present case the type is not perfectly pure. Fryzowicz is indeed a small handworker and a typical town inhabitant, but his correspondent, Wojciech, besides his handwork has a farm, as frequently happens in small towns. These townsmen-farmers are the natural intermediary class between the peasants and the lower bourgeoisie, although they are not numerous enough to play an important part in social organization.

which you sent me in the letter. I laughed that you are such a frolicsome fellow and knew how to rejoice me. And I thank you for answering me at once.

And now I must speak with you and have an explanation. Why are you not satisfied when I speak or write to you *wy* and not *ty* ["you" and not "thou"]. I think it [W.] is a very nice letter. Why do you not like it? You cannot do without it at any rate, because how can anybody omit it in speaking to you, either "Wojciech" [more reverential, full form of the name] or "Wojtek" [more familiar form]. But I cannot agree with you [about speaking "thou" instead of "you"], unless—if our Lord God gives health to us both and we live long enough—when you return from America we shall both tend hornless animals [pigs]. Then I shall have more boldness and I will say "thou" to you.[1] So now I love you with my heart and I respect you with my love, and I wish you every good. [More wishes.] Now I inform you that in Kalwarya † Priest Podworski is dead, the same who sent us images . . . . and in Lwów † is dead Priest Adam Weszolicki, editor of Gazeta Niedzielna. [Four more priests who died.] And now in Podegrodzie we have another priest-vicar. . . . . And in Nowy Sącz a student tried to drown himself on a fair-day. . . . . And in Stary Sącz a thief stole 400 crowns from a shoemaker. . . . . And the weather is very beautiful. . . . . And the watches which you repaired keep going. . . . . And the highway is made now near Józek Duda['s farm]. [Wishes and greetings.]

KUBA FRYZOWICZ

674 June 12, 1914

[General introduction in very bad verse; greetings; health; etc.]. I love you heartily, so I ought to write more often to you, but I am so hindered, because I must sew the whole day, and when Sunday comes I have also occupation; some come to speak about work, others to take the clothes. So I write you down whatever I heard from other people. In Podegrodzie there will be a cloister [a church] founded, on the spot where Mrs. Stroska has a small shop. . . . . They will pay her as much as she asks, but she must move away from that place and field, because at that place was born Jan Papczyński,

[1] "Did he tend pigs with you?" is a proverbial saying, used when an inferior assumes undue familiarity with his superior. The whole paragraph is, of course, a manifestation of the writer's humility.

may our Lord God give you health for a hundred years, since you treat me so nicely. . . . .[1]

Now I inform you . . . . that the winter here is very good . . . . nice weather during the whole carnival; so beautiful that it is a joy to live in the world!

And then I inform you who got married. [Enumerates 10 weddings.] And Józek Hejmejak [son of Hejmej] was to marry in Gostwica, in the house of [the daughter of] the former mayor Plata; the wedding was to be on Wednesday before the end of the carnival. But it got spoiled because they could not come to an understanding, for Hejmej refused to will [to his son] the whole *półrolek* [ancient division of land; literally "half a field"; now it means a farm of a certain size].

And then I inform you who died. [Enumerates seven persons. Greetings and wishes.]

JAKÓB FRYZOWICZ

673 April 19, 1913

. . . . Go, little letter, on the journey, because I cannot go myself. Fly, little letter, across mountains and valleys to the distant country, fly across waters and rivers as far as America. When you find the house of my brother, stand at the threshold and praise our Lord God. When you are near, bow low to my brother, and when you are nearer, bow still lower, and stand in a corner and say in a low voice into my brother's ear that you come from Little Kubina [contemptful form of Kuba, itself diminutive form of Jakób] from Łyskownice, from the one who sews *górnice* [kind of clothes] and beg him, little letter, to accept you, beg my brother to take you in his hands, and tell him that Kubą wrote below whatever [news] he heard.[2]

First of all, my heartily beloved brother I greet you. . . . . My legs are not yet quite well, but perhaps I shall recover slowly. May God reward you a hundred fold for your advice, what to do in order to recover sooner. And [I wish] heartily that God may reward you for your letter. . . . . And I thank you very nicely for the snuff-tobacco

[1] Accepting the gifts in this case puts the man in a certain situation of inferiority. He is a *komornik*, without land, while his friend is a farmer. The gifts belong to the class of property, not of income, and the reason for giving them is not social solidarity, but personal friendship.

[2] The whole of the preceding introduction is in verse.

We must agree with the will of God, because whom God loves upon him He sends crosses. My leg pained me also very much, but our Lord God granted me to recover passably. [Crops and weather.]

And further I inform you that the parish-festival on St. Jakób's Day had three meanings. The first meaning, as usually, every year. The second meaning, that on this day 900 years had passed since the first church was established in Podegrodzie. The great portal was adorned with flowers and pine trees, and of them the figures 1014–1914 were made. The third meaning is the reception of these Marians about whom I wrote in the last letter that they would come on St. Jakób's Day. Two of them came, one had a sermon about this St. Jan Papczyński and St. Kunegunda. [Details of the ceremony.] They brought from Cracow many books, biographies of St. Jan Papczyński, and whoever gave 2 crowns for the cloister-fund received this book, and our priest had pictures of St. Jan P. printed. People took so many of these books and pictures that a big fund was gathered, and I don't know who gave money for a big picture of St. Jan P. in a gilded frame. [Description of the service.]

And now, when I write this letter, I inform you what is going on in our country. Well, a terrible war has begun with Servia, and on August 2, when I write this, all the recruits and reservists belonging to the army have gone to Bosnia to the war. . . . . What a crying and lamenting there is in our country! It cannot be described. From Stodoły a ferryman was taken with his boat somewhere to the Vistula; he will there carry the army across the river. Chmura has been taken, the same who came from America. He had sold his farm and intended to go back to America; meanwhile he was seized and taken to the war. Now they are to take from the farmers, horses for transports and cattle for meat. . . . . In Wieliczka and Bochnia the salt [mines] will be closed and people will eat gruel, cabbage, etc., without salt. If only the Muscovite goes to help Servia, there will be a terrible war. And I inform you that our host has been called to the army and designated to be a constable. It is somewhat better because he won't go under fire, only he will go where he is ordered. And now I inform you who died. [List of dead; repetition of the same news about the war, and particularly about the taking of horses and cattle from the peasants.] On August 1, telegrams came for all those who belong to the army to go at once . . . . and so some of them threw away scythes, others sickles, others rakes,

and he is a saint. He was born 213 years ago, he founded a cloister of Marians under the Muscovite, and now two are left from this congregation. The Muscovite drove them away from his land, and they came to Cracow and they are in Cracow, and on St. Jakób's Day they will come to Podegrodzie, and one of them will preach, and they will settle in Podegrodzie forever. . . . . And this I inform you, that our priest went with pilgrims from Cracow to Jerusalem, to Bethlehem, to Nazareth, to the mountain of St. John. The land Palestina is in Turkey. . . . . And further I inform you that in Podegrodzie there is an orchestra of twenty musicians. . . . . And further I inform you that 7 men have been called to the army from Gostwica. . . . . And our Jasiek lost his watch; they went for birch-wood . . . . and he lost it in the bushes. He went twice to search for it, but he did not find it, and he promised the people who gather wood money for finding it . . . . and he went to a fortune-teller in Sącz that she might foretell whether he would find it or not, and she told him that he would find it, and indeed 3 weeks later . . . . a man found it and Józef gave him 2 *szóstki* and got the watch. . . . . And Błasiak Michał . . . . sits in prison. . . . . He is to sit 4 months for having wounded the hands of Plata with a knife, and he is also to pay him 150 gulden for cutting his hands. [Describes in two pages how the man was arrested.]

JAKÓB FRYZOWICZ

675 August 2, 1914

MY DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER: . . . . I was very glad when I received your letter and I read it with joy, but when I came to the passage about your accident, your misfortune, that your leg has been so injured, then I wept. But nobody saw it except our Lord God alone, because nobody was looking when I read the letter; nobody knows and nobody will know what you wrote to me, because not everybody ought to know what your condition is.[1] I love you heartily and I pity you because your strength is so weakened for how can you walk and work when your legs are aching. But nothing can be done.

[1] We find here the implicit admission that sickness, and misfortune in general, are things to be ashamed of and not to be spoken of before strangers. This attitude may be perhaps explained by individual psychology, but it is possible that it points back to the more primitive social identification of physical and moral evil in a unique magical evil principle.

OSINIAK SERIES

The letters of Osiniak, with the introductory letter of his friend, Leon Mazanek, present in an isolated and magnified form two attitudes which, while seldom quite conscious, play an important part in the life of the Polish country-people, particularly when it comes to an adjustment to modern conditions. Those attitudes are love of nature and love of personal independence.

The aesthetic love of nature arises when for some reason the utilitarian and the mythical attitudes disappear. One example of this evolution is shown in the peasant literary production. Here the imitation of existing literary models develops an aesthetic attitude, and immediately we find a very intense productivity in the line of descriptions of nature. Another example is the life of which Osiniak's letters give us a description—the life of poachers, foresters, bee-keepers, etc., whose utilitarian attitude toward nature finds a much narrower field than that of a farmer, and in whom some instruction has destroyed the mythical beliefs without destroying the feelings which accompanied them. In the case of Osiniak and his friend the aesthetic attitude could develop particularly easily because they are sons of town inhabitants and had not the traditional utilitarianism of the farmer to overcome.

As to the love of personal independence, it is perfectly natural among handworkers of a small town, who have for many generations worked at their own risk and profit in their own small shops. It would seem, on the contrary, that this feature could hardly have developed among peasants under conditions of serfdom. But this is not the

and went to the church, to confession, and on Sunday to the army and to the war!

And so, dear brother, it looks in our country. What will follow, God only knows—how it will end. The priests and the papers say that people ought not to care about it, because such is the will of God, and everybody must agree with the will of God.

And now . . . . you write me not to pay for my letters. But I should be ashamed to do it; even if the postage cost a crown, what does it mean in comparison with brotherly love. You pay also when you write to me, and surely you don't regret it, because it is done willingly and freely, without any compulsion. . . . .

JAKÓB FRYZOWICZ

elements analyzed above—love of nature and love of independence—play an important rôle.

The nature of the friendship which united the men is of interest. While the actual homosexual relation seems to be almost never found among the Polish peasants, there is evidently in the present case a distinct feeling of the homosexual kind. In Osiniak it expresses itself in the lack of any heterosexual relation (stated in a letter of his friend to the authors) and in the distinct jealousy with which he dissuades his friend from marrying. In Mazanek we find a romantic idealization of his friend, of the classical type. This idealization, as contrasted with the prosaic attitude toward his own married life, is evidently assisted by the poetical remembrance of the surroundings in which they had spent their youth, as well as by the subsequent death of his friend. Nevertheless it is an interesting manifestation, in relatively primitive conditions of life, of the "Greek love."

As to poaching, described in detail in some of these letters, there is of course little prejudice against it, since game is not considered the property of anyone. The spirit of adventure was not developed among the peasants until some thirty or forty years ago, and poaching was quite sufficient to satisfy it.

676–82, FROM WŁADEK OSINIAK, IN GALICIA, TO LEON MAZANEK, IN AMERICA, WITH A LETTER (676) FROM THE LATTER TO THE AUTHORS

676 CHICAGO, ILL., November, 1914

DEAR SIR: Having read the advertisement in *Dziennik Związkowy* I send you six (6) letters which I received from the friend of my first youth, who has not been alive for some years. If you can profit from them, please notice that in the first letter, of May 26, 1903, some phrases are written in numbers, which can be read by putting numbers to correspond with the letters, i.e., 1–a, 2–b, 3–c, etc. The author of

case, and for the following reasons: (1) Serfdom had innumerable degrees, from the absolute subordination, amounting to slavery, of the landless personal servant of the lord, up to the almost complete liberty of the crown and church peasants. (2) In the normal type of serfdom the peasant-farmer had only to give a part of his time to the lord, while he disposed freely of the rest, and this continual contrast between compulsory work and free work must have helped to originate and to keep alive a conscious appreciation of independence. (3) The interference of the lord or the government with the peasant's personal life was limited to important and rare occasions, while in his everyday life the peasant was bound only by the social opinion of his equals. This explains the fact that the peasant appreciates much more this liberty of the everyday life than more important social and political liberties, and at the same time the seeming paradox that he hates the detailed organization and limitation of individual life in modern industrial cities, while he complies with it almost without opposition. He hates it because he sees no equivalent in free citizenship for the lost independence of everyday life, and he complies with it because he is accustomed to comply with any authority, for during centuries the authority had exerted itself only on important occasions and inspired a hereditary awe.

So in this respect, as well as in the attitude toward nature, Osiniak and Mazanek, although of the handworker class, are good representatives also of the peasants. The usually less marked misadaptation of Polish country-people to city life is, however, magnified in their case almost to a tragical degree. Osiniak never became adapted at all, while Mazanek, through his marriage, seems forced to bear it. And certainly, in many of the non-specified complaints which we find in letters from America, as well as in the longing of Polish city-workers for country and land, the two

a degree that for the vain profit of a few cents I send those letters from my best and only friend, which I have kept in a good hiding-place for many years and read hundreds of times. But I hope that I shall receive them back. . . . .

LEON M.

677 GŁOGÓW, May 26, 1903

DEAR FRIEND: You ask what is the news in Głogów. Everything is as it has been from old; one can say, "Old misery." [Letters written and received; general news about acquaintances.] As I see, you want to fill your pocket at once with dollars, for when you had easy work you kept it for a short time, and now you remain longer in the factories, which, I believe, must be like hell. Perhaps you have now more money; it ought to be so. But perhaps not? It is also true that writing is tiresome enough, particularly for the eyes. I don't even want to read books any more, and I marvel how you could read so much when you were writing [as a clerk] in Głogów. When I arise from this paper I go home in the evening like a blind hen. Oh, there is no better, more joyous moment than to go with a stick [a gun; poachers' jargon] to the forest. But they guard it well! I shall write you below about different adventures, because now I should like to find something to say about Głogów, but I can find nothing; without joking, I cannot. [Some news about people who intend to go to America.] In your home all are in good health. This winter we celebrated in Głogów the 40th anniversary of the insurrection of 1863. In the town there is no news at all. If you write soon, use numbers in some words. And now I will tell you something about shooting [the word ciphered]. First I tell you the fate of Fr. Morarski, like that which happened to us. Somebody from Głogów, probably W. M., killed a deer [cipher] in January and the gamekeeper [cipher] drove him away, so that he had to throw the gun away, or he hid it after shooting, and the keeper saw this and found it later. It was a double-barreled gun. He imagined that it was Fr. Mor. And moreover, the deer disappeared, because another companion of the man fled and carried it away while the keeper was pursuing the first one. . . . . The keeper took the gun to the chief forester and drew up a complaint against Morarski, who proved that he was in Rzeszów at the time, and the keeper will probably sit [in prison for false complaint]. Then he drew up a complaint against Bartuzel, but this also

these letters, Władysław Osiniak, as well as myself, signed below, was born in Głogów, Galicia, 1½ [Polish] miles from Rzeszów. Głogów is a small town inhabited by poor but independent handworkers, who have not even an idea of the slavery of an American factory workman. The town is situated in a very beautiful country, groves and pine forests surround it with a green and black ring, ponds overflowing with fish glisten in some places. Streams and rivulets flow from the forests into the ponds and out of them, gathering themselves into a river, Szlachcianka. (This river is called "Szlachcianka" [noble girl] because the daughter of a nobleman, proprietor of a manor, was drowned in it—so says the legend.)

Władek (so I briefly called my friend) was the son of a shoemaker, I was the son of a tailor. We lived in the same street, our houses faced each other. Our parents lived in great friendship. My father and Władek's father were seated every summer evening in the garden under an old widespreading lime tree (near every house in the town there is a smaller or larger orchard, even the public roads are planted with fruit trees) smoking their pipes. My father took part in the last Polish revolution [1863] and he related his adventures during this revolution and his 12 years of service in the Austrian army. Władek, a great dreamer, as a boy 14–15 years old roamed with me around the neighboring forests. Often we slept in the forest. In the morning, about sunrise, we arose, awakened by the morning cold, we admired the sunrise, sitting upon big oak trunks on the highest hillock, situated above a pond. In the east cultivated fields are seen and a rising sun which is reflected in the pond; in a half-circle a glade planted with young pines, about 6 years old, and farther another half-circle, all this inclosed by a great mixed forest of oaks, pines, firs, alders, full of big game. In the brushwood are hidden hundreds of hares, foxes, martens. Oh, what a delightful impression one felt in walking during the night, by the light of the moon, along the hills, with a true friend at one's side who adored nature—playing flute and ocarina! The moon reflected itself in the pond; the echo of the flute flowed far away up the dew. Sometimes we could hear the barking of foxes, or the bleating of roes who called one another, or the hooting of an owl. We dreamed about far countries, about travels among American prairies, African deserts, and the jungles of India. These dreams drew me here, where bad fortune torments me, penury annoys me, 3 children cry for bread, a wife complains, and I myself have lost all shame to such

chase. Even worse things happened. Not long ago, on March 8, "it" [a deer] got a good one. "It" could not jump a moat and fell into the water and was no more to be seen. . . . . And another time things did not go better. St. Zaj. and Wl. Zaj., on Good Friday afternoon, went to the forest in search of "this." They came across a "big one." The first time the gun did not go off, only the second time, but he missed, being in a hurry, and this saved him. He hid the gun and marked [the place] by breaking a branch. They went a few steps and suddenly the gamekeeper appeared from behind a thicket. They could not run, because he was near. He approached and whistled. The son of the chief forester appeared with a gun and threatened to shoot at them. But as they found nothing, they only quarrelled and wanted to take [the poachers] with them, but they did not go, and so the question was left. But they [the keepers] went to search for the gun, and because there was a branch broken, they found it, as they are practiced in the matter. There was a lawsuit, but nothing can be proved against them. If they had looked into their pockets and found the peas and sand [buck-shot and powder], it would have been worse. . . . .

Your friend,
WŁ. OSINIAK

678 PRZEMYŚL, March 29, 1905

DEAR FRIEND: Well, so you are still alive. . . . . I could not believe I saw your handwriting. Perhaps you reminded yourself about our young years? Alas, they won't return again! But nevertheless you could have written at least once in half a year. I think that you don't regret a few cents, and if indeed you have little time there, you can still make an hour's sacrifice for your old friend. You don't need to make efforts to write poetically or in some new style, but quite simply. I cannot explain to myself what was the reason of your long silence—whether you cannot get accustomed to the American ink or pen, or perhaps you belong to some sect which abhors writing, because in the New World even this is possible. . . . . What do you expect to do about the military service? Write me what you think about it. I am now in Przemyśl, in the post-office. It is not so bad, only there are no holidays, only half a day every Sunday. They pay for it, it is true, but it would be better to get a few gulden less and to be freer. It is so difficult to get a leave that I could not

resulted in nothing. Then against the man who was there really. But who can prove it? The only result is that they now guard the forest of Głogów better. The second thing will be interesting enough. Listen. St. Zaj. and Wl. Zaj. killed a roe . . . . about 5 o'clock in the evening and, as they like to do, wanted to take it home right then. They came to the meadow near the spring. . . . . Suddenly about 20 paces back of them somebody called: "Hello, thieves!" and so on. What could they do? It was not very dark, so they could only leave [the roe] and fly, before he recognized them. And so they did. He [the keeper] could indeed have tried the plan: "Stop, or I will shoot," but he did not think of it. Only later we learned that it was [not the keeper but] Józef Jaroński and Jan Domański who were setting traps for martens. They took the roe and ate it, but at least everything was quiet. Now another [story] still. On Sunday evening after 10 o'clock we went to the forest on the other side of the fields, by the light of the moon. We were 4: two had to drive [the game], two to stand [and shoot]. When we came to the fields there was fog. You could not see another man at 5 paces. So we walked close to one another in order not to get lost. . . . . We came to the forest, but in the fog we did not see much; it was cold—snow up to the knees. If I had not remembered to take the compass we should not have found the way to the forest. After 1½ hours of driving, those who stood were frozen and moved, intending to go home, and only then we came, having driven nothing. We hastened then to our house as to a friend. As to the gamekeeper, with whom we are acquainted, probably you don't know him. He often comes to Mr. R's . . . . with a cart; he is keeper in his forest. He was a good fellow more than once with us. I shot only once at the deer, and it was so: I walked a long time about the forest, I went beyond the last hill . . . . ; they were there. I moved toward them for half an hour perhaps, and it was difficult, because there were 5 of them, 2 lying down and the others loafing around. It was necessary to conceal myself carefully and to advance cautiously, lest they notice me. I came to 45 paces, I leaned against a tree and shot. I missed, as it proved afterward—about 10 inches too high, for the bullet was in the tree under which the deer lay. But nothing could be done, I had to be reconciled to my fate. At other times it was different. Once we ran through the whole forest of Głogów following the traces of a bleeding deer which did not fall. Then it stopped bleeding, and that was the end of our

free you from this honor of serving the "fatherland"; and if not, you will still have time to receive such dainties. Even the dog does not put his back under the stick; how much less the man who is not menaced by the honorable authorities [who is out of reach]. Think of it as if a trap had been set here, and be careful not to step into it, at least not at once. I don't find anything interesting around me, as in service one always tries to rise above the others. I have been beaten enough in my youth [disciplined by the rough life of a poacher] so that I don't need to take much pains in competition with an old gendarme or an ex-corporal. . . . . You ask what I am doing now. Well, it is enough to say, as in any post-office. I don't know what I shall do in the future, I live without any aim and I don't try to find any—if only for that reason that I missed once. You can't imagine perhaps how hard it is to resign a thing about which one has thought for a long time. I kill my free time going on a bicycle around the neighboring villages and towns. Up to the present I could not believe that Lajos Dragulski is bound [married] already, but I must believe your words. Perhaps he will regret it some day—or perhaps not; it cannot be foreseen. My sister Bronka got married also . . . . and I could not even be at the wedding because it was difficult to get leave. . . . . I can go home very seldom, though it is only 12 miles and the fare is 5 crowns there and back. I am quite bound—free time only on Sunday afternoon—and every day I must rise at 5 in the morning; two hours for dinner; till 6 in the evening. It is perhaps better than to do handwork, but one is not free. I am paid 1 gulden 15 kreuzer a day and the uniform; on the side I get only a few crowns a month [tips]. But here everything is so expensive that almost nothing is left, and when holidays come, Christ our Lord! one becomes almost enraged. Other people amuse themselves, and the post-officials labor in the sweat of their brow, so that one does not want to eat when he comes home for half an hour at noon. I think that you don't work there much more heavily in your factory. Well, in a mine evidently one must labor hard. . . . .

W. Osiniak

680 September 21, 1906

Dear Friend: I received your letter for which I thank you most heartily. I am glad that you did not begrudge the time or paper, as before, to your old friend. But perhaps we shall yet see one another

even be at home for Christmas, although it is only 12 [Polish] miles from home. I am in a storehouse, delivering parcels, because I read well; so sitting in the lawyer's office has proved of some use. Besides, I have learned to read Ruthenian. I do nothing but deliver parcels, sometimes 1,000,000 crowns worth. After New Year I hope to deliver letters in Przemyśl. Evidently I have no time now to amuse myself like a nobleman [to poach]. On the day before going to Przemyśl we got horns [killed a hart]. It was on Easter, in the thicket where hazel-shrubs grow, with St. Zając. Since then nothing more; he is in the army in Rzeszów, and I am here. . . . . You see that I know how it tastes to be alone in a strange town; how much worse it must be in a foreign country! But I hope that you are getting on better now, because you can speak more easily. Describe what vicissitudes of fortune you have passed through during this time. Are you not married perhaps, like Józef Podo and Dragulski? I should not wish it so soon to you, as to a friend. But don't conclude that I experienced it upon my own skin; I am still free as a bird in the sky. I don't know what to write further, nor what you want to know. . . . . I wait for a big letter. . . . .

WŁADYSŁAW

679 June 9, 1906

DEAR FRIEND: . . . . Don't despise writing; force yourself to do it. To me you can write with a pencil upon any bit of paper. . . . . I won't be angry, and it will cost you much less trouble. It happens sometimes that you sit somewhere in a garden, you are bored, you have nothing to do and nobody to speak with; there is a pencil and paper—because you don't wear ink with you. You compose a letter, you come home and either copy it with ink or put the same writing into a cover, address it with ink and on the first occasion put it into a mail box. I perform this duty in this way even in writing to my people in Głogów. I don't lose my free moments on your letter, I write it during the time I am on duty in the post-office. Even now a salesman is interrupting me. The devil brought him to annoy me, but I must be patient.

You are right in not thinking of returning home for military service and wasting the precious time in putting your mouth under the fist of Mr. Sergeant. Something can still happen during your pursuit of happiness [e.g., you might become crippled], and then they must

upon us [for not having learned], although we are also guilty a little. Only think, what did my father or your father earn! Could we have learned, even in a *bursa* [where poor boys are boarded and schooled]. I could have realized my dreams even without learning, I could have been happy in simplicity, but bad fortune persecutes me even here, so that I look unwillingly and almost with anger upon this world, as you noticed in that last letter. I would undertake mad things which would guarantee a rapid end. And you, fall mortally in love if you will, but after some weeks of love, don't marry, but when the first love passes, then reflect, look well at this creature before and behind, and then act according to your will.

I forgot to write you that I have seen living Indians here in Przemyśl. There was an American circus named Buffalo Bill. [Describes the performance; admires particularly the good shooting.] What is the news in America? In Russia there is revolution. Nobody in Warsaw is sure of the next day, and the government does not want to give the constitution and we cannot foresee what will come of it. Every day some policemen and their superiors perish. But the "heroism" of the Russian soldiers shows itself upon the innocent population; those who make the attempts are usually safe, and the innocent people are arrested. You can guess how the Russian officials treat them there [in prison]; it needs not to be explained to a man who reads the papers. They are braver now than against the Japanese! . . . .

WŁADEK OSINIAK

681 December 17, 1906

DEAR FRIEND: I received your letter. Oh, what a wedge you drove into my head [distressed me]! But don't let us lose our balance, but discuss things in their order. First, I rejoice that your health is good. As to weariness or despair, don't think that I am free of them. If I am not at least three times more weary than you I ought to thank God. Perhaps you no longer believe in such a being from beyond the world, but you mentioned something about the devil in your letter, and since you believe in the latter, you ought the more in the former. I am almost alone here, like a finger, because my associates look crossly at me, and if I had not been beaten [and hardened as a poacher], more than once I should be ready to weep. It

once more. What do you think? It seems improbable indeed, but nothing in the world is impossible; so perhaps even here the government will change some day, and then perhaps it won't be so difficult to live as it is now. Well, and perhaps the Polish girl [you are to marry] in America won't be able finally to bear the wandering in a strange land. Take this also into account, because you would be badly off if she sweetened your free moments with dreams about returning home. And I should not advise you either to marry one who is born there, because it would be like fastening one's self with a nail to that world there. Again as to character and birth there are great difficulties; the man ought to know the woman well before marrying her. Well, I think that you won't bind yourself so soon, because it was only a hasty thought, a consequence of your longing for your country. But you must persevere. And perhaps you want to deceive me? For a year or three, since people say that it is possible there [to marry for so short a time] I should like to try such delights, in spite of the Christian principles. I ought not to be afraid, because in your preceding letters you wrote that at least you don't think of doing this foolish thing just now. It is also not right [to object], because the world could not exist if all those [who marry] were fools. But one ought to look soberly at such questions.

In Głogów there is not much news. Dragula, Bałaban, Grodecki . . . . and other men of my age have already come back from the army, having served three years each. . . . . Władek Grodecki plans only now to marry Kościuszkówna; he ought to know her well enough, even from under. This year big rains have fallen, the pond in Stykow overflowed its banks, so that water ran through the road. The beech tree upon which you cut your name for the last time stands safe, the spring is in the same place, only we are farther away from it than before. I have not forgotten the last day either. Don't drop the thought of returning just because you don't know any trade. You can set up a shop or a tavern if you have a few ten-gulden pieces, and you can live freely, as, for example, Sokołowski, Żywiec, Pado, and many others in Głogów. It is easier than handwork and does not need protection. Only look into this American citizenship, so that it may not be anything like a mousetrap [whether American citizenship frees from the duties of an Austrian subject]. So you could come back, and I say it is worth while, though I don't try to persuade you to do it. [You say] "Learn! learn!" We cannot take all the fault

discouraged from living because of this, and at least don't stop writing, because I should like to have at least your address from time to time, because nobody can guess the future. So I don't need to write you more clearly. At present I cannot answer or undertake anything positive. You ought to forgive me and to understand why I am a little too lazy. I hope that it will pass. Finally, I wish you happiness and good luck in 1907.

Your true friend,

WŁADEK

682 February 2, 1907

DEAR FRIEND: I received such a letter as I did not even expect, and I am very grateful to you for it. I am doubly sad that I disappointed your expectation, but in spite of my best wish I cannot fulfil our old promises at the present time. Perhaps God will grant that it will be possible later on. Don't imagine that I have changed completely. I have only passed, or rather experienced, some disappointments, and therefore it is possible that I am somewhat more peevish than during my youth, but I hope that you will forgive me such a sin. I wrote that I don't think of marrying, and you need not suspect me of falling in love with an inhabitant of Przemyśl, although it is not a crime and I would confess it to you, my most tender friend, at the first occasion. As to carrying letters [becoming postman] it is also very doubtful. I don't see anything ahead. I stand as before a cross-way. I believe it will be necessary to do any silly thing in order to end this uncertainty. . . . . And don't forget me entirely even in California. I thank you for the photograph. I will perhaps put it into a frame and will wear it hanging with my watch; it is suitable for that. You have changed hardly at all in these 2 or 3 years, but as you say yourself, it was made 2 years ago. I expected rather to see big whiskers, and I see a young American. Well, may fortune favor you. I can inform you also . . . . that our Milka [probably younger sister] has also got married. Here in Galicia there is nothing new, only at the university [of Lemberg] Ruthenian students, *hajdamaki* [=robbers; old nickname of Ruthenian insurgents] beat the professors, broke and tore valuable pictures, and now sit [in prison]. There is even the son of an usher from Przemyśl, a Ruthenian, who sits on account of the Polish university in Lemberg. His father does not mind it very much, but he will probably be driven

is also difficult to find such a friend as I want. Here I think frequently about myself, whether I am so fit for nothing, or why I have such a bad opinion of this world, and I can find no other reason except that I have a feeling of beauty and a love of beautiful views of nature too strongly implanted in my soul. We spent too much time in the forest, dear friend, when we were young, and it is difficult to tear these memories out. I see here well-instructed men who have not one hundreth part of such aspirations [love of nature], and how much more difficult is it to find a desirable friend among the "paupers" [intellectually poor] or how else do you call them? And I don't expect to find any, except . . . . I meet somebody, for example, and say, "Let us go outside of the town." "Why," he answers "isn't it all right here?" "Well," I answer, "if you are suited, then good-bye." And the devils take him! Let thunder strike such a life, since you wish it also! I no longer expect to find happiness, it is not suitable to dream about it. To see the world? At present it is an unrealizable wish for me, so I did not even mention it to you. There is only one reason why I hope that it won't be too late, that is if only I don't marry, I shall have free will, and then we shall see. I don't want to work up to my death either, I don't even think of it. Some years ago I should have clung to such words without reflection [probably to the invitation to come], but just then there was no money. Now money is more easy to get, but the conditions are such that I must consider everything well. It is true that I did not bind myself, but what of that? We are matched, it is true; we suffer through it; this is also true. And what will happen later on—I am stupid and I don't know, as I don't know what I shall be in the other world, a horse or a dog. You speak about getting sickly [in order to become free from military service]. It seems to me also that I got too sickly, I am not quite well now with my breast, perhaps it will pass away; I don't know. This call to military service made me suffer much. I did not spare my health, I thought: "Either [I will be free]—or [I will risk my life?]." I walked during severe cold at night, my toes froze, and who knows whether I had not inflammation of the lungs, but did not lie in bed. The military examination passed happily, but I can no longer believe in my health. Well, but I don't mind it much, perhaps in this way I shall reach the end, because why should I live? If it were only for this reason, I cannot say "Yes" or "No" [to your proposal to come to America]. Don't be angry or

KRUPA SERIES

We place this series at this point as illustrating the friendship arising between members of the same family, in addition to the familial relation, upon the basis of a community of cultural life.

The situation in the Krupa family is that of a growing separation between the old and the young generations and a new kind of solidarity (although only a partial one) between the young people. We find this dissociation of interests between parents and children in some other series (Markiewicz), but there its basis is the struggle of different social and economic forms of life (familial organization and individualism, old and new class-divisions, property and salary as foundations of economic life), while here the dissociation has its source in new moral ideals which the young generation develops, and other differences are only secondary.

The essential ideals of the young generation are those of individual intellectual development and of active service to the national idea—both rather strange to the parents. We have translated three letters of the latter in order to show how completely their circle of interests is limited to the traditional conditions of peasant life. The only reason compelling the parents to give their children instruction is the economic one; they have too many children to keep at home and they hope that through education the children will be able to attain a better position in life. But even this consideration is not always sufficient to move them to spend money on instruction. Thus, only through the promise of Józia's help are the old Krupas moved to send their third daughter, Basia, to a school, and over Stasia's going

away from Lemberg. Well, in the devil's name, this won't cost me anything.

I am tired of such a life under an ax [like a slave]. Neither holiday nor freedom. Let the clear lightning strike it! When holidays come, other people breathe [rest], even a horse, even a Jewish one, has holidays sometimes, and here in this post-office one goes almost mad. For example, I have not been in a church at mass for almost a year. Well, I shall get to heaven! I have nothing more to write, especially since I have written six letters this evening—home sending wishes for the wedding at which I was not present, to Jasło, etc. I greet you most heartily.

Your friend,

WŁADEK

such that they could be fully adopted by any individual of the peasant class as soon as he understood the necessity of substituting conscious efforts toward individual and social development for passivity and tradition. Her intellectual and patriotic ideals are limited and determined by a strong religiosity (of a more profound and personal character than the usual peasant religiosity). The qualities which she wants to see her brother develop are those most useful in a peasant community—laboriousness, parsimony, sobriety, practical energy, and wisdom. Aesthetically she enjoys most, in full consciousness, those phenomena which appeal the most to the half-conscious aesthetic sense of the peasant —nature and religious ceremonies.

The second typical way in which idealistic attitudes are developed (most frequent in women) is represented by Stanisława. The individual becomes conscious of the existence of a certain sphere of interests and aspirations higher than his own. He understands at first only its superiority, without really understanding its content, without discriminating between various ideals. A desire to rise to this higher sphere develops, and with it the consciousness (often exaggerated) of his own imperfection in comparison with the superior men who are at home in this higher sphere. Then come strenuous efforts toward self-development, always accompanied by the feeling of humility. The nature of the ideals which the individual will make his own depends in this case, not upon the individual's past, but almost exclusively upon the content of the set of ideal interests and tendencies which he has first begun to understand, i.e., ultimately upon the group of intellectual, aesthetic, moral, or religious workers which he happened to encounter and which first introduced him into this new world. Of course it may happen later that the individual meets a different set of men and ideals which seem to

to Kruszynek there has been a long struggle, while the parents of Karolcia S. [a cousin] refuse to send her at all. As to the national idea, in the old Krupas there is a passive clinging to the Polish nationality, but not a trace of any thought of contributing actively to Poland's progress or to Poland's liberty.

On the contrary, the young people show a real enthusiasm for both ideals. In Józia this enthusiasm is already equilibrated and self-conscious; she is the oldest and best instructed. The advice and the occasional scolding which she gives to her brother show her eagerness to see him become an educated man and an active patriot. In Stanisława (Stasia) the enthusiasm is still naïve. Her admiration of the country between Cracow and Warsaw (aesthetically the ugliest part of Poland), the pride with which she enumerates the subjects she is beginning to study (whose names she cannot even record without error), her plans as quickly formed as dropped, show that the desire to attain some superior ends is formed before the ends themselves are clearly conceived. Finally, in the brother there is evidently a great vitality and enthusiasm, but connected with an adventurous spirit and an insufficient determination of his own attitudes with regard to various possible ends.

These three individuals are typical, each in his own way, for the development of this kind of idealistic attitudes, both in the lower classes under the influence of the higher classes and in young people of any class under the influence of their elders. The simplest case is that in which the individual by his previous life has been prepared to accept consciously a determined end—intellectual or moral self-development, realization of certain social and political desiderata—and gradually subordinates to it his lower egotistic tendencies and his traditional attitudes. This case seems to be realized exactly in Józia, whose moral and social ideals are

sees with particular joy that her brother has developed a sphere of interest more or less common with hers, and she tries to make this community as close as possible. She, and in a measure her brother, are glad to see that Stasia will soon become one of them, and Stasia understands it and feels proud and humble at the same time, until, in her last letter, she begins to show a greater independence and self-consciousness. Finally, Józia helps to attract Basia into their circle. This solidarity is not limited to their immediate family. Franciszek, the instructed peasant, sends at his own expense his betrothed, Karolcia, to the school when her parents refuse to do so.

Nevertheless, the solidarity is not perfect. The brother in America not only shows tendencies to develop certain attitudes in disaccord with those of young people in his own country, but does not seem to acknowledge fully Stasia's rights to independence of views and of life. Perhaps it is his situation as presumptive heir of the farm which leaves, in spite of all his "progressiveness," a certain background of the plain peasant materialism in economic and familial matters.

These attitudes, here only incidentally mentioned, will be illustrated in another collection of materials (Volume IV), treating the actual evolution of the peasant and the movement of social idealism.

683–94, TO WOJTUŚ KRUPA, IN AMERICA, FROM FAMILY-MEMBERS IN POLAND

683 KROŚNICA, November 30, 1912

DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: I intended to write you long ago, but I was always hindered by the lack of your exact address. I have received it from home only now. So I hasten to talk with you by letter, since it is impossible to do it by speech. And I want so much to have this talk with you, but a sincere, hearty talk, a truly brotherly one. I should like to tell you what lies upon my heart, and to receive

him again superior, and then the same process is repeated, but it is the first awakening of ideal interests as we find it here which is particularly important for further development.

The third type (more frequent among men) is given in the brother to whom the letters are written. Here the attitudes are determined, not with regard to the higher sphere of idealistic interests, but with regard to the lower sphere above which the individual rises. Any new and higher idealistic attitude acquired appears as the ground of an attitude of superiority assumed toward the materialistic tendencies, the apparent meanness of everyday life, the traditional customs and beliefs, etc., and toward the men who are their representatives. Sometimes a mere theoretical or verbal acknowledgment of a higher end, without any effort toward its practical realization, satisfies the individual and suffices in his own eyes to justify his superiority. There is in the beginning hardly any selection of the idealistic attitudes; any attitude may be accepted which fulfils the condition of being a basis of superiority in any regard, and frequent and apparently illogical changes may occur, determined often by the fact that the influence of a given attitude has been exhausted, that it has ceased to provoke admiration or to make the individual feel his superiority—as every emotional reaction is weakened by habit. If the individual finally selects a definite end, it is, consciously or not, the end which seems best to justify the permanent attitude of a superior man, a reformer, a prophet, etc. Evidently, there may be more or less sincerity mixed with vanity, and frequently an evolution toward a greater sincerity is noticeable as the individual progresses in age.

The solidarity among the young people upon the basis of their new ideals as against the old generation is well expressed in its evolution. Józia is first alone. Then she

684 February 17, 1913

Dear little Brother: . . . . I inform you that your letter rejoiced me very much, for I see from your words that although in a foreign country and among so many dangers, you have still remained true to all that you took with you from your native home. I am glad that you always feel a Pole and a Catholic, that you work and economize in the thought of your fatherland and family, that you avoid bad society and try to instruct yourself and to develop intellectually. We need precisely such men today, who are not only able to work hard, but also to economize and to use their money properly. And this will come as soon as our people get at least enlightenment enough to understand that a man ought not to work simply in order to drink and to waste his money later. Unhappily today it is usually so, both here in our country and there in foreign countries. So nothing more is left for me than to encourage you to go farther on the way which you have chosen. Read and learn as much as you can, particularly in your native language, though the English may be useful to you there. And then, put aside as much money as you can, of course not being too parsimonious about your food or any honest amusement. And God preserve you from the idea that you might remain in America forever! How many of the strongest and healthiest men our fatherland loses every year! Oh, may nobody make this already large number still larger, but after earning some money and getting more experience may everyone return speedily to his native threshold and use them here in an intelligent work for the good of his fatherland!

Probably they have written you from home that Stasia went to an agricultural school in the Kingdom [Russian Poland]. It is of course very happy news to us, for our Stasia will be able to learn farming and housekeeping. And today everybody is proclaiming that an agricultural school is indispensable for country girls. But I was quite astonished that our parents, particularly father, agreed to it. At any rate it leads to expenses, and we both know that when money is mentioned in our home the question goes as upon clods. [Proverbial.] Well, thanks to God, that it ended so. May she only happily finish this school, then the three of us could talk among ourselves about everything and understand one another. . . . . Aunt Grabowska will perhaps come to me in the spring, for now I am very lonely among the mountaineers. I live alone in the school, but I am not bored, for there is always work. I have 80 children, so my head

your confession in turn. I hope that you won't refuse my request and that this letter will be the beginning of our understanding. Do you agree?

Time has flown already since we saw each other. When you were going to America we could not even bid goodbye to each other. When I learned from our parents that you had gone away I was very much grieved, for knowing your hot nature I was afraid some misfortune might befall you, which is not difficult in a strange country for a young and inexperienced man. But, thanks to God, I hear that everything is going on well with you, and I pray always the Holiest Mother to keep you under her protection. Meanwhile, thanks to the help of God, I passed my examination happily and am working now for the second year as a teacher. I teach in the district of Nowy Targ; so it is among mountaineers. I am alone in a small mountain village. The work is rather difficult and tedious, but the people and the children are very well-disposed toward me. And so we are both working independently for our piece of bread, we are thinking of our future. We are both far away from the native home but I am at least among my own people while you are far away beyond the ocean, surrounded by people who speak to you a strange language, and often pray to a different God. So don't wonder, brother, if I feel often anxious lest you forget that you are a Pole and a Catholic. But this will never happen. You will always remember our native village and the small church, our old house and our parents. Stasia wrote to me just now that you have joined the Polish "sokols." This is precisely a proof that you remember that you are a Pole. I hear also that you learn English. Evidently this will make your stay in America easier, but don't forget to read Polish books also. Dear Wojtuś, I hope that you will answer me at once. I shall wait impatiently for your letter. Write me at length, how and where you work, and how you are succeeding. Are you in good health? What do you do on Sundays? Whom do you visit there? And in general everything about yourself. In our country there is trouble now; everybody speaks of war which may come. The Christmas holidays, so dear to us, are approaching. I wish you to spend them in the merriest possible manner, and remember how they are spent in our country. I wish you so, as if I broke the wafer with you at Christmas eve dinner. . . . . I embrace you and greet you heartily.

Your loving sister,

JÓZEFA

none of that kind, then send me any. You sent some home, but I did not see them. . . . . What did they write you from home? To me nothing, and I don't wonder, for father is busy from dawn till dark with work in the field and has no time to take up a pen. How do they manage there, poor people? Here it is now very nice, for this is the month of May, the most beautiful in the year, consecrated to the Holiest Virgin, the Polish queen.[1] Therefore children adorn her statues and pictures, and everywhere songs in her honor resound. . . . . It is splendid everywhere, the larks sing, the cuckoo calls, the frogs croak, and a single great choir resounds. In our Krośnica it is so beautiful, so green, that I want always to run about the fields and mountains. Alas! I must sit in the cabin, for *primo* [I must] teach the children, *secundo* prepare myself for the examination which I have to pass in the autumn. But though I sit at home, I see through the windows splendid mountains around me. I hear the murmur of the stream and the singing of the birds. I tell you beforehand that as soon as you come back you must at once come to me, and then we shall enjoy different mountain-trips. Staśka intends now to come to Zakopane and visit the Tatras, of course with a tourist party. Only she is anxious, poor girl, whether she will have the time.

For the news about Władek W., I thank you heartily. I was very pained when I read it. For I believe (and it seems to me that I make no mistake) that Władek is lost to us. For, as a married man, he surely will not wish to go to the army, and this awaits him certainly if he comes back. And if he does not serve his time he will never be able to come back. And what a grief it is for his parents, who had quite different hopes about him. I won't tell it to anybody, for only gossip would result. It is a sad fact, for in this way hundreds of Polish men and women are lost to their fatherland, settling forever in America, or—what is worse—getting morally lost there. And meanwhile in our fatherland there are simply not hands enough to work. In recent times emigration has even increased because of these different troubles. Here in our country [Galicia] as in the whole empire, the disorder is terrible—the struggle of parties, our local parliament dissolved, new elections, a new governor. May God only grant that the Poles get no harm from all this. May the Polish Catholics win, and not the Jews and Socialists. . . . . Did you

[1] Allusion to the symbolic crowning of the Virgin as Polish queen by King John Casimir in the seventeenth century.

scarcely holds out. We have now severe winter; sledging is very good. If you knew how pleasant it is to go thus with sledges on Sunday to church in the midst of these white fields of ours, and then to kneel down before our Lord Jesus and to sing with one's full voice, *Gorzkie żale!* ["Bitter Regrets," a religious hymn for Lent]. Do you, Wojtuś, ever hear there our beautiful *Gorzkie żale?* Probably not, for where should you? [Rumors about Balkan war.]

JÓZEFA

685 May 19, 1913

MY DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: . . . . Accept for your letter a hearty "God reward." Every one of your letters causes me an enormous joy, and makes me still nearer to you, if it is possible. I am still more thankful to you because, though not having much time, you nevertheless write me such long letters and confide to me everything so willingly. I wait impatiently for each letter, and when I receive it, I read it more than once. I am very glad that your health serves you well. Still I would advise you to change your occupation and, if possible, to work somewhere in the fresh air, the more so as, according to your own words, you intend to visit America a little; so perhaps you will find somewhere such an occupation, even if for smaller wages. For, you see, nothing spoils health so much as staying in a sultry place. . . . . And remember that you are still a young boy and that our fatherland needs healthy and strong sons. I not only do not blame your [intention of] visiting America and becoming better acquainted with it, that is with the United States, but on the contrary, I encourage you. Trips and changes of this sort are very instructive. So if there is no difficulty about it, do it. Probably you will regret leaving your *drużyny sokole* [friendly sokol associations],[1] but it seems to me likely that there are also branches of the sokols in other localities. As to the English language, certainly, since you are there and have the opportunity to learn, it is worth while to profit by it, for everything you learn may be useful at an opportune moment. How glad I am that my brother is a *druh sokół*, for our whole hope today is in these "friendly associations." I would beg you also very earnestly to send me your photograph in a sokol's uniform—for probably you are having yourselves photographed. Or if you have

[1] The word *sokół* means "falcon," and under the name are organized societies, mainly of young men, for athletic and patriotic purposes. *Druh* is an old Polish word meaning "friend"; *drużyna*, "associations of friends."

look again at America. For it is not worth regretting. And I think it is more gay here, in spite of our misery, than there, with their riches. You guess probably that I got the news about you from Kasia W., whom I met in Podgórze. Well, she is quite fit for America! I beg you very much, Wojtuś, don't give her my letters to read and don't tell her what I write you, particularly about her, for there would be only useless anger. It is true that they are our family, but they belong to those who don't care about their native country and see their happiness only in America. We cannot improve them, so let us rather be silent and do what is our duty without listening to their principles, often erroneous. And I should prefer if you kept far from them, though politely. Were it not true, what I heard about you! I shall wait impatiently for your answer to this letter. And I beg you very much, as your loving sister, write me the sincere truth, confide in me everything, as a good brother to his sister, for I am very much grieved. . . . .

JÓZEFA

687 GOŁOTCZYZNA, March 2 [1913]

DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: How happy I am that I can at last write to you. You don't know how I was pained that in such an important change of my life I could neither talk with you nor even write to you. . . . . I took your address from home . . . . but unhappily I lost it . . . . and only now that Józia sends it to me I hasten to write and to describe to you everything, and also to learn how you get on, how you succeed. . . . . Dear brother, how do you like my going to this school? Are you perhaps very dissatisfied? For on the one hand the fee in this school costs somewhat too much, and a year of time will be wasted. But I think that I shan't regret it. For now learning gives the means to live and is everywhere the best foundation, particularly when this enlightenment is lacking among our women in the country. Now, when people begin to think about learning, it begins to get better and better in this world. But unhappily there is still very little of this learning. And then, I did not decide alone about myself. I wanted very much to go and I begged [my parents] for a long time to be permitted. And they did not wish to give their consent, but only when Karolka's betrothed began to persuade them. Perhaps you remember him, Franciszek, who was farm-manager in Czasław. He had been himself in such a school, and he held out very

celebrate there the anniversary of the constitution of May 3?[1] Here it was everywhere solemnly celebrated. . . . .

JÓZEFA

686 August 1, 1913

DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: . . . . I received your letter and photograph. . . . . Judging by the photograph you are a nice boy, but very childish. I thought that you were already more serious. And see here, such a child wants to consider himself already as a citizen of the United States, and dreams I don't know what projects. You will think probably, what do I want from you? Nothing more, dear brother, than that you may not forget there, in this exile, about our holy faith and our mother-country, that you may be always a true Catholic and Pole. For, O my dear, whoever is not a good Catholic will not be a good Pole. Without God there is no fatherland, and even if we bring I don't know what offerings to this fatherland, we shall not get our liberty back without God's blessing. Dear Wojtuś, I was very much pained to learn that you do not fulfil there in the foreign country our religious practices and duties, which every Christian Catholic ought to fulfil. But it is really impossible! I cannot believe that my brother has forgotten his prayers, which his mother taught him. It is true that you are young and inexperienced and bad society can do much evil, but I don't believe that you went so far as to lose your faith. Oh, this would be worse than anything! And another question, no less disagreeable. I learn that you intend to become an American subject [*sic*], and then again to join the American army. It would mean the same as to renounce your fatherland. My dear, in America only the men can settle who have here nothing to lose, but you have, I think, your whole future here. There is work enough and honest earning in our country, only people don't know how to take care of their money. And if you want to serve in the army, here you won't escape that pleasure either. I think so: earn as much as you can, learn as much as possible; in a word, profit well from your stay there, and then back to us, and don't

[1] The constitution of May 3, 1791, was an endeavor to reorganize Poland upon a new basis. It failed because of the subsequent division of Poland. The anniversary is always celebrated in Poland as a claim that (after a century of decay) the nation gave proof of its capacity for self-government (by the provision of a more democratic and centralized organization) and that the partition was contrived by hostile states precisely because Poland had demonstrated that capacity.

what she is occupied with, and in vacation she must pass her examination, and surely nobody will come here to me. Well, nothing can be done, the journey to me is too far. If God grants me to pass this year happily I shall see everybody again, and perhaps you will come then—so you also. But now I must think about study and work, for here we have study and work above the ears, so that we have not even time to worry. For the first month we worried [were homesick] a little, but now already less for, as I wrote, we have plenty of work and many companions. I have a few such good and hearty companions that if we had to leave one another now we should surely cry. Now, as to the studies, we are studying many things. Besides the usual farm-studies, we have lectures about agriculture and we learn all the natural sciences, i.e., geology, chemistry, physics, astrology [*sic*], and so on; also writing, arithmetic, geography, sewing, cutting, and different small handicrafts, so that the whole day is filled, and there is not even time to write letters. But this does not matter, for on Sundays we have a little time, and then we write letters. On ordinary days we rise at 6, on Sundays at 7. We go to sleep at 10. We go every Sunday to the church; we have a church near. Besides this, the Sundays are spent merrily; we make trips to different places, we arrange different theatrical plays. [Greetings, request for letters, etc.]

STANISŁAWA

688 April 10, 1913

DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: . . . . I was very glad on receiving your letter and the news that you are in good health and not displeased with all this. . . . . Your letter, though short, is so kind, good, and sincere that it was a pleasure for me to read it. So once more I thank you a hundred fold for your letter, for your recognition of me, your advice, and the proofs of your brotherly love and good will. You even guess [more than I expressed], dear little brother. Up to the present, indeed, I did not need money very much, so I did not beg for it expressly; and then, I was afraid that my letter would not reach you. . . . . But you must know that whatever you send . . . . you must send it to the address of the school-superior. [Exact address and details.] Perhaps it will seem ridiculous that I give you only addresses [without asking what I want]. But it did not suit me to write [more clearly]. Well, though I did not ask you formerly, now I beg you very much indeed. It is true that our parents send money to pay the school, but

much for Karolka and me to go to the school, and he made different efforts to this effect. And our uncle and aunt from Kamienice praised [the plan] much and advised us to go. And when Józia wrote a letter, that if I went her [greatest] wish would be accomplished, and that she would help me all in her power [they agreed]. But we were to go and then again not, from fear of the war which might break out from moment to moment. As things became quieter, we went, but what of it, since that war was not settled finally, but it can still break out, and will almost certainly do so in March. Oh, it is horrible. In Galicia they begin to take [to the army] boys from 18 years up. May God the Good keep this war far from us, for it never brings happiness, even if it is the best. Were it at least a war for our country, for our Poland! But for the sake of some ports, etc., it is not very pleasant to go to war. But you are probably more curious about other things, so I will describe my journey, the surroundings here, and whatever I can.

Perhaps you received my letter in which I wrote you that I go to an agricultural school in the Kingdom. I wrote you that we were going to Kruszynek, but in Kruszynek there was no more room, so we came to Gołotczyzna. We left on January 15, amid leave-taking and crying, so losing our heads that we did not know which way to take, whether to go or not. Some people began to dissuade, others frightened us with war, others still that it is hard to cross the frontier. Well, but we went, and upon the frontier there was no big terror at all, we were treated politely. We went through Częstochowa and Warsaw, for Gołotczyzna is in the province of Płock, and the province of Płock is still far enough beyond Warsaw. If you knew, dear brother, what a beautiful country it is, such plains that you cannot see the end, big villages, a multitude of brick houses, one village far enough from another, and exceedingly many of the most various mills, windmills, factories. The farmers are richer than in Galicia. In some houses the order is quite exemplary. In a word, we were well pleased here. We saw the cloister of Częstochowa, and we were in Warsaw for some hours, and saw many things. It is a very beautiful city, this Warsaw, situated in a splendid lowland and the Vistula flows near it as a wonderful wide girdle. Dear brother! How happy I should be if you could come to me, visit this country. But alas! these are dreams which will turn into nothing. Józia wrote me that she wished greatly to come to the Kingdom, but that she cannot, for you know

have bad results for you, for it makes your life more various, gives you various knowledge and develops your spirit and your courage. Moreover you remember to learn, and in these times it is perhaps still more important than the preceding thing, for now the struggle by means of knowledge is easier than with the fists. At any rate, knowledge is indispensable. And then, dear brother, you remember about your parents and send them money, for perhaps now they need it, and when you return they will give it back with interest. I heard something like this, that you intend to remain in America, but I don't believe it, for what would then be the use of sending money home? And moreover should you not long for your country, would it not be hard to work during your whole life and never to breathe any more the free air of your fatherland? No, dear brother, it cannot and ought not to be so. I think that you work there heavily only in order to enrich your country, your family and yourself, but not to leave this money in the foreign land. Well, I will give you here a plan. Perhaps it will seem ridiculous to you, but I consider it very suitable. Save, dear brother, as soon and as much money as you can; then come back and we will go to Lithuania and buy land there, for there is land enough and cheap—no more than 150 gulden a morg. I have here a few companions from Lithuania. They are very rich and honest girls. They tell me everything and persuade me to go with them to Lithuania. I should like to persuade our parents also to do it, but it would be difficult, for they are no more in the strength of their age and cannot so easily leave their country. And it seems to me that for us it would be very well, for there in Galicia, particularly in our district, the land is expensive and there is very little of it, so that farming is not splendid there at all; one must continually add one penny to another in order to defend one's self against misery. It is difficult even to think about enlarging one's farm. For me therefore nothing is left except to choose some career, to study a little more after leaving the school and to work in my chosen career, for there is not much at home to return for, while thus, by putting our strength and our fortunes together, we could buy something. But more about it later; we have time enough. Meanwhile I would learn whether it is true that Władek W. got married? They have written it to me from home. We will not go on a trip to Galicia, but we will travel about the Kingdom, but this is good, that we shall learn to know the Kingdom well.

this year there is to be a general excursion of the students to Galicia, and this will cost about 20 crowns. So I am afraid to ask our parents, for indeed there might be too much of all this for them. If you are so kind, dear brother, as to fulfil my request, I shall be very, very grateful to you. For I want very much to be on that trip, and I reflected to whom I might address my humble request, and I mentioned it in my first letter to you. When you expressed the readiness to do it I rejoiced very much that I can beg you and not be disappointed.

Dear brother, how is your life going on, whether sad or gay, or simply monotonous and indifferent? Have you got accustomed to your life? For up to the present I had no idea of any other life than that which I led at home. Well, and now I have got a little acquainted with a different life. For some people it may be splendid, for others merry, for others indifferent, for still others sad. My life here is various; sometimes merry in a group of companions, satisfied while I am studying, and at other moments if not sad, then indifferent. And the days pass with a mad rapidity; I don't know whether yours also? I have not any pains here; we live in rather good concord. I have only some contrarieties about religion, for here some subversive spirit prevails. I shall describe it more exactly another time. As to my study about God [of theology], it goes on well enough. I have nothing more of interest to write you, only I embrace you heartily. . . . .

[Stanisława]

689 June 3, 1913

Dear little Brother: Hiding myself in the garden (for if I did not I should have to work in the garden and there would be no time to write), holding the letter upon my knee, I begin to write. Pardon me, if it is so scribbled. . . . . I am very glad that you are healthy and that you succeed well, for, as I see from your letter, God the Merciful does not desert you, and though you must work heavily the fruits of your labor are to be seen. And the work did not make you a light-headed man nor a spendthrift, for when one has to work hard for his money he learns better how to manage it. It seems to me that you don't look upon this question in a different way, for it manifests itself in many things. You don't act as other emigrants, our acquaintances, do, but on the contrary, you remember your fatherland, for you joined the sokols. I like it very, very much, and surely it won't

now, on the contrary, I have a hot wish to return home. And perhaps I shall return, for it is not yet at all decided that I am not to return. It will depend upon our parents, and upon this—where I shall be able to use better the learning which I shall acquire here, whether at home in farming or in some other occupation.

Dear brother, pardon me for writing all this, but please don't think that you have such an unreasonable sister in whose head sits only worldly emptiness. Forget, little brother, everything that I wrote in that letter, for it was written perhaps too unreasonably and mechanically, so it is useless to attach a great importance to it. And don't take, God forbid, that which I wrote formerly and what I write now in bad part, for I write you all this heartily and truly, as to a brother. Don't think that I am perhaps offended for these few words. As many admonitions as you may give me, I will be only grateful to you. I should like to explain all this to you the best possible, only it is too difficult in a letter.

But probably you are weary of reading these excuses, which are much like reproaches, so let us pass to another subject. Dear brother, how is your work? It seems to me that it goes on pretty well, since you earn nice money. They wrote me from home that you sent money and how much you sent. Józia is very much satisfied with you. She wrote me that she noticed from your letters that you did not get spoiled at all in the world, but, on the contrary, you are an orderly [good] boy. And Aunt Grabowska is proud that you are among the sokols. Basia wrote that you intend to send them your photograph in a sokol uniform. I would beg you very much to send me also such a photograph if you can; I should be very glad. I wanted to take your photograph from home, but they did not permit me. Karolka here adds her request to mine, for she also wants you to send a photograph. . . . .

I have nothing more of interest to write, for different trifles about the school probably don't interest you, such as, for example, that we arrange organization-meetings and we want to organize a scouting association. I don't know whether you have heard anything about such associations. Their end is also a better lot for Poland. Then, we publish a paper in common called *Dźwignia* ["The Lever"].

Your loving sister,

S[TANISŁAWA]

I have here such religious contrarieties, because there is too great a subversion. Some of my companions, though not all of them, believe that man is created from the ape. Besides this, they consider different prayers useless, etc. And it troubles me much, for it is not so. But now things are greatly changed, and when they learn better then such absurdities will evaporate from their heads. I did not write anything home about it. I wrote only to Józia, and don't you write either. You wonder perhaps why I don't mention anything about money up to the end of my letter, but I knew nothing yet up to the last moment, till the post came and brought the money, for which I thank you most heartily, my golden little brother.

Your loving sister,

S[TANISŁAWA]

690 July 14, 1913

DEAR LITTLE BROTHER: . . . . What lies upon our heart, we write it first. So you did, and I will do the same. As you, dear brother, cared most about cleaning yourself from the reproaches which people made to you, even so I must present to you more clearly the conclusion which you drew from my own letter.

My dear brother, don't think at all that the thought of leaving my native roof, my native home, the parents, etc., is so pleasant to me. If you knew how hard a struggle I must fight [with myself when I think] that this will happen really some day and that I must go away—if you knew all this, surely you would not think that I don't want to return home.

But I don't wonder at all at your thinking that my head is turned and therefore I don't wish to come back home, for from my letter this was clearly to be seen, and you don't know the conditions well enough on the basis of which I came to this school, so I will explain them a little better.

As you know, our parents don't get on easily [alone] and surely they would prefer if I remained at home, but the economic conditions don't permit it. Our parents have reflected enough about it even before my departure to the school, and they were convinced beforehand that it won't be worth while for me to come back home after finishing this school. Mother advised me to choose some career, and our parents almost agreed that I shall not return home, except for a short time. Then I wished more to be somewhere in the world, but

money, dear son, send it to us, then I would buy it at once in your name. Even if you don't send, we shall buy it, but it would be better if you sent us something, for your uncle wants 225 [gulden] for it and we have only a little more than a hundred, and we must borrow the rest. I don't write anything more of interest. Thanks to God, nobody among your relatives and acquaintances died. At home we are in good health, thanks to God, only Józiek was a little sick. He caught cold when he went to church on Sunday. . . . . Now I ask you still about one thing. When you write to us, tell us whether you have seen anywhere Władek Wolski, or heard about him, where he is, for your aunt Wolska begs you very much. He has not written to them since last spring, and people send various news about him that he is getting on [or: behaving?] very badly there. They had informed us in the same way about you when you did not write to us for so long a time, having lost your work. They said that Jędrek, your uncle's [son] pushed you down from a tramway, that you lay sick in a hospital. Was it true? We are very curious. I asked you about the same in the preceding letter, but you write that you have not received any letter. . . . . I wonder very much who devours or holds up all those letters. . . . .

JAKÓB and FRANCISZKA KRUPA

693 October 20 [1912]

. . . . DEAR SON: [Letters sent and received; farm-work; weather.] Now, dear son, I beg you, if you can put aside some money, send it to me. I would buy a colt, for now we have gathered hay and clover enough at the second harvest, only I lack money, for we have spent on that piece of land which we bought from your uncle, and we spent those 100 reński which you sent also on this. We had borrowed about that much money, and we paid the debt as soon as you sent it. And if you send some money now, even if not for the horse, we may put it into the bank, for your uncle wanted us absolutely to put those 200 crowns of yours [100 reński] also into the bank, and if our Lord God grants it, we shall put them yet. For when you went away people said that it was a pity that we had sent you, that you won't pay us back even the journey. So now, when you send money, everybody wonders. And we need much for our farming, as it usually happens. Moreover, this year the crops are bad. The grain is not very bad, but we did not dig more than 20 korcy of potatoes. As to Józia, she does not need any more money. She sent a

691 RADZIECHOWICE, July 12, 1914

DEAR WÓJTUŚ: . . . . Why don't you write? Have you really forgotten us? Perhaps you are angry with us. But I consider it impossible. What should you be angry for? Such trifles as, for example, that we don't answer your letter soon? Perhaps I have expressed myself a little inconsiderately, for such things may be very unpleasant, even painful. But even to strangers such things can be forgiven to some extent, and it is so unjustified to be angry with one's parents or sisters for such things that I cannot believe that you would do it.

But I suppose another cause of anger, which I don't know even, only guess. It may be possibly our home conditions, magnified by human talking and presented to you in a colored light. I don't write it clearly, do I? But it is only because, first, it is simply difficult to explain it clearly in a letter. Secondly, I don't know whether this letter will fall at once into proper hands (i.e., yours). So you must remember and guess many things, and ask for others in a letter, and then I will explain them better. . . . .

I came from the school in January and will return to the Kingdom in August. This time I shall go to Warsaw, to the Teachers' Seminary. If I finish this course, which lasts 3 years, I shall receive a place in the Kingdom as a teacher. All this business will cost me about 500 gulden. It is a big sum indeed, but what can I do? I shall have at least a secure existence and shall be able to help our parents at some moments. . . . .

You have heard perhaps that Karolka Stoyka is getting married in two weeks. . . . . She marries Franciszek, the man whom you knew, I think, and who sent her to that school.

STANISŁAWA

692 January 1, 1912

. . . . DEAR SON: [Letters received and written.] Józia is already a teacher; she is in the mountains, 3 miles beyond Nowy Targ and 12 miles from us. She did not come for the holidays to us, but to your aunt in Podgórze [either because it was nearer, or because of disharmony between her and her parents]. We heard that she has 30 reński of salary [a month], but she did not write how she succeeds there, she wrote only a small card, "Merry holidays," and nothing more. . . . . Now your uncle from Bieżanow is selling that cabin with that piece of land and we are buying it. So if you can earn some

PIOTROWSKI SERIES

The man Walenty Piotrowski, to whom these letters are written, is a type whose characteristic features are present to some degree everywhere at a certain stage in the process of rising from a lower class to a higher level. Two varieties of this type have found their expression in the French terms *rastaquouère* (or *rasta*) and *cabotin*. The *rastaquouère* imitates the refined attitudes of the aristocratic class while lacking the innate refinement of character which would make these attitudes natural; the *cabotin* assumes the intense and refined feelings, the high ideals, and heroic efforts of a superior man, while he is, in fact, essentially commonplace. As the aristocratic refinement finds its expression in social forms, the *rastaquouère* begins by imitating these forms; as the type of a superior man is most explicitly and accessibly expressed in literature and art, the *cabotin* begins by using these expressions. The *rasta* and the *cabotin* have to be distinguished from the snob and the hypocrite. The snob seeks mainly to get recognition or toleration from a group to which he does not hope fully to belong (the dog is the pre-eminent snob); the hypocrite uses the socially sanctioned attitudes of his own class. Neither of them tries really to assimilate any superior attitudes and to get thus into a higher class. Both lack one interesting feature of the *rasta* and *cabotin*, who play the comedy of higher attitudes not only before others but before themselves.

There is a great field for cabotinism among the lower classes of Polish society, because the higher classes have developed, in addition to their refinement of manners, many attitudes which in the lower classes are almost lacking, or

nice gift on mother's name-day and asked us now to give Basia to the school, promising to help her. So we gave her, and this will also cost. And now I also [Stanisława] prepare to go to an agricultural school. We both, I and Karolka Stoyka, will go to Kruszynek. . . . . If we can and if my parents allow me, we shall go perhaps on New Year. It will cost us 150 crowns each. Karolka's father won't allow her to go and won't give her any money, but her sister-in-law's brother, who is a post-official in Biała, advises her to go and will send her money. And I have hope in you. [Family news; marriages.] Dear brother, mother is glad that you are learning, and does not blame you at all for having inscribed yourself [in a school?], only she is still curious whether you read any Polish books and go sometimes to the church and hear sermons. Our parents request you to go to the church as much as possible, for without God all your efforts will be of no avail. . . . .

[PARENTS]

694 May 11 [1913]

DEAR SON: We received your letter . . . . and the money, 410 [written: 400 10] crowns for which we thank you. . . . . Now, dear son, we think about it, how to use this money, whether to put it into the savings bank or to pay our useless debt back. For if I put this money into the bank, I should have only 20 crowns of interest in a year, while I must pay 26 crowns on 400 crowns, so in this way 6 crowns a year would be saved. For you I can put money into the bank in partial payments, or to buy a piece of land if there is some opportunity, for this is most secure. Last year, when we bought this half a morg from your uncle it cost 250 reński and, thanks to God, we have paid it already and now we have a wider lot in a single piece. But there is now no opportunity to buy a small piece of land, and for a large one we have no money. Antek and Józiek thank you for that money which you sent [for them]. We bought clothes and shoes for them. Zośka and Stefka thank you also and rejoice that mother will buy for them some nice stuff for dresses. [Weather; farm-work.] We greet you heartily, we your parents and all your sisters and brothers, and the grandmother from near the forest and the [paternal] uncle from near the forest and the [paternal] uncle and aunt from the field and the [maternal] uncle and aunt from the big house, and all your relatives and acquaintances. . . . .

JAKÓB and FRANCISZKA KRUPA

of the lack of originality of his literary composition, for we find among his papers a rough draft of a letter in verse which he sent, or planned to send, to his parents, and it is nothing but a copy of one of the schematic poetic addresses to parents printed upon the sheets of letter-paper sold in America. Walenty, instead of sending a letter with such a printed introduction, evidently copied the latter in order to pass it off as his own composition.

Again, in the line of social idealism, he pretends to be interested in the socialistic idea. But he does nothing for this; he does not even belong to a party, for this requires some sacrifice. He is satisfied with occupying in form the attitude of an enlightened and self-conscious workman, and he does not even try to rise higher in the workman class, nor to exert any positive influence upon others.

The attitude of romantic love, sincere with Hanka, half-sincere with Stasia (who seems to be much of a female *cabotin*), is clearly imitated and insincere with Walenty, who is continually playing before the girls, his friends, and himself the fine rôle of lover. Flirting with both girls at the same time, he affects heartbreak, first, after the marriage of Stasia, and then after the death of Hanka.

We have no data as to his imitation of the refined manners of the higher classes. But there are many hints about the attitude of superiority which he occupies toward his fellow-workmen in America and of the isolation in which he pretends to find himself because of the low cultural level of his environment.

Finally, there is one general feature of the *cabotin* which Walenty has to the highest degree. It is the interest—the only sincere one—which the *cabotin* naïvely takes in himself and in his various attitudes. It is the necessary accompaniment of the whole process of conscious imitation of a higher type of life.

were lacking until half a century ago. These are, particularly, intellectual and artistic interest (to a certain extent present among the peasants, but without the tendency to develop along these lines); social idealism (nationalistic and also recently socialistic ideals); romantic love; and, finally, the general attitude of superiority toward the lower classes, based upon the preceding attitudes. Now, whenever an individual of a lower class tries to get into a higher class he has not only to rise economically and intellectually and to imitate the external forms of the life of the higher class, but he must also assimilate the attitudes of this class. And this always gives rise to a certain amount of cabotinism. Sometimes the attitudes are assimilated really and easily (Zygmunt and Hanka in this series) because of a natural or social preadaptation in the individual, or the assimilation of some attitudes may be real and sincere, while in others the individual becomes a *cabotin*.

But Walenty P., as he appears in this correspondence, is a perfect *cabotin* along all lines. First, he imitates the intellectual interest; he writes about general problems; he probably reads a little. But in comparison with Zygmunt it is evident that this interest exerts no real influence upon his life. In spite of Zygmunt's advice and the example of his enthusiasm for knowledge and intellectual self-development, it does not seem that Walenty tries seriously to develop himself. His work, amusements, and excessive letter-writing leave him hardly any time for this. His own letters show a much lower degree of culture than those of Zygmunt, who is younger. His display of interest in this line is evidently artificial. Nor is there more of sincerity and depth in his aesthetic interests. He takes part in amateur plays, but without real interest, as Zygmunt points out. He shows off in the literary line and sends poetical letters to everybody. But we have a good proof

But the relation of "liking" demands no exclusiveness. The claim for exclusiveness appears only as a result of a contractual relation—marriage or official betrothal—or of a concrete sexual relation (if the latter has results), because through the child the sexual relation becomes mediately a social fact. Thus a man may court many girls and a girl may have many suitors—not only *may* but *ought to* do so—each knowing about the others, and the indecision has to be accepted as a matter of fact. No claim to exclusiveness is put forward and no feeling of personal dignity can object to hesitation in the other party.

But if the peasant tradition acted alone in the present case, it would not be sufficient to explain the situation. Indeed, the peasant courtship requires much finer distinctions, much more weighing of words, etc., than we find in these letters. Expressions as far-going as are used here would certainly be equivalent to betrothal if used among peasants. They are in fact imitated from the higher classes and mainly derived from books. But in a higher class also they would be equivalent to a proposal, and at this point we must take into account the other body of tradition—that of the old lower bourgeoisie, i.e., the craftsmen and handworkers.

In certain respects there is incomparably more freedom in sexual matters within this class than within the peasant class, though this freedom is, of course, only before marriage, as in the corresponding German (lower middle) class. Perhaps also there has been an influence of the German mores, as a part of this class is of German extraction and the town-organization was imitated from Germany. But certainly the wandering life of the journeyman and the small trader must have contributed to the development of the freedom of sexual relations by lessening the responsibility of the man and by allowing him to break off any engagement.

The situation found in the letters of Stasia and Hanka is peculiar. Each of the girls knows of Walenty's flirtation with the other; both are in love with him, Stasia more superficially, Hanka more profoundly. There is jealousy between them, but neither dares to claim the man exclusively for herself; each accepts his indecision as a matter of fact. And the man hesitates to the end. He does not seem to be very much in love with either of the girls, and still he is serious with both. His relation with Hanka is closer and more friendly; his attitude toward Stasia more romantic. And while he makes declarations of love to both, he proposes to neither.

This situation can be fully understood only if we consider the social background upon which it developed. The persons involved are of the working class, passing into the lower middle class. Now the traditional set of attitudes in the working class is drawn from two sources—the peasant life and the life of the crafts-corporations. Into this mixture is here infused the ideology of the upper classes, partly through books, partly through the medium of the lower middle class. And it is this mixture of heterogeneous elements which explains the present situation.

As we know from the peasant letters, love, as idealization and individualization of sexual attraction, does not exist in peasant life in the form of a socially acknowledged and sanctioned attitude—though this does not mean that it does not exist as individual fact. The fundamentally sanctioned attitude before marriage is "liking" (friendship); after marriage "respect." The sexual life before marriage is socially condemned, after marriage ignored. (Incidentally, this may also explain to a certain extent why the loss of virginity is not so definite an obstacle to marriage as in social groups where sexual life itself is socially acknowledged as a basis of marriage.)

in a totally different way. In short, the real situation would require letters intermediary between more or less ceremonious friendship- and acquaintance-letters and open love-letters—a type which in the upper classes would characterize the beginning of a love-relation. But here no intermediary form is found. Instead, there is a most unharmonious mixture of isolated expressions, each of which would be adequate only in either a love-letter or a ceremonious letter. It seems as if there were in the girls and in the man a strange alternation of contrary attitudes following one another immediately and without transition, while in reality we see here only the result of the inadequacy of the form, imitated from the upper classes, to the content, originating in the attitudes of the lower classes.

Curiously enough, both girls attain finally a more or less adequate expression and in quite contrary ways. Stasia finds it by eliminating the element of love and by dropping into an attitude of cold acquaintance. Hanka, on the contrary, finds it by rising above all the traditional attitudes of her class and by developing really and unreservedly the attitude of romantic love characteristic of the higher classes. Her evolution is due to two factors—book-culture and an isolation from her usual milieu, which in the beginning may have been affected but finally becomes real. Perhaps her sickness has contributed also, for we notice more than once a higher refinement developing in sick girls, precisely because they are more isolated and live a more intense sentimental and intellectual life.

The main interest of the letters of Zygmunt lies, (1) in the kind of relation which unites the two men; (2) in the type of Zygmunt as a "climber" in the better sense of the word.

1. The relation is one of close friendship, with a background of homosexual affection on the part of the older

Marriage itself is here more an individual than a familial matter—at least more so than in peasant life. The economic basis of marriage is also different; work and craftsmanship count more in comparison with property than in peasant life, and in general the personal life has much more importance. These, and perhaps other factors, have contributed to the result that in the lower bourgeoisie sexual relations with girls are much more frequent than among peasants, and engagement and betrothal have a much less definite character. Nevertheless, while the relation—courtship, betrothal, sexual intercourse—lasts it is exclusive; it may be broken off, but not shared with another. Thus the situation which we find in the present case would be scarcely possible if the traditions of the lower bourgeoisie were acting alone, not in combination with the peasant traditions.

Finally, we have a third element—the expression of romantic love, imitated from the upper classes. And it is curious how insufficiently assimilated this form is. There is a peculiar lack of harmony and of adequate expression in every letter, and judging from certain statements the same feature must have characterized the letters of the man. A perfectly cold and formal letter may be followed by another in which love is expressly declared. Or in a single letter a quite ceremonious form of address may be followed by declarations which would require the dropping of all formalities (particularly in Stasia's letters). Or, again, phrases of love may alternate with others which seem to exclude any love-relation. Phrases which express confidence in the man's reciprocity are found along with others in which the contrary opinion is stated, and without any adequate transition. Or the most burning expressions of gratitude and devotion are wasted upon such trifles as receiving cards, photographs, or a ribbon, while constraint and coldness characterize many phrases which should be written

social ladder must get rid of a great deal of the traditional elements. This (in addition to the irreducible individual difference of character) explains the fact that the "climbing" in Zygmunt assumes the particular form in which the tendency to rise socially, to get instruction in order to pass into a higher class and get a higher position, is closely allied with, and partly subordinated to, a general disinterested tendency to self-development, while both these tendencies were dissociated in Maks and Wacław M., each of whom developed only one of them. There is more plasticity in Zygmunt, and the intellectual and moral influence to which he is subjected can act more freely upon him. For example, the economic problem, which determines to such an extent the life of peasant climbers, plays a very small part with him. He has neither to develop nor to overcome the traditional yearning for property. Again, he does not need to spend his energy on the religious problem, as the religious life never determined his personality to such an extent as it does with the peasant. But he remains in a general way religious, and his socialism does not interfere with his religious tendency, such as it is.

Henryk is a more ordinary fellow than Zygmunt, but has come under the same general influences. His life-plans are much more determined by his actual situation and by the problem of *work* than by his aspiration to a higher culture. In love matters his attitude is typically that of a workman. His behavior in matters of gossip is that of a man whose sphere of interest is inclosed by the limits of his community, although it is not so fixed a community as that of the peasant.

The girl A. P. is Walenty's cousin. She is also much more of a peasant than Walenty himself, or the two girls Hanka and Stasia. The introduction in verse to the first letter, the religious attitude, the attitude toward priests, the manner in which she speaks of her wedding, the importance

Walenty which Zygmunt evidently does not share. As far as he is conscious of the other man's tendencies he tries to check them at once and to give to their relation a character of normal friendship. The relation as we find it here is typical. (Compare the Osiniak series.) Perhaps, indeed, there is a little of homosexual affection in every close friendship which is not based essentially upon a community of interests. A mediate proof of it seems to be that marriage usually either interrupts friendship or changes its character, makes it more like a business friendship. On the other hand, a proof that the homosexual tendency almost never passes into act is that the closest friendship does not interfere with normal relations with girls. The existence of this homosexual element is more easily detected in Poland than elsewhere because, particularly in the lower classes, there is no inhibition imposed upon the expression of a man's feelings in general. In this respect it is interesting to compare Zygmunt and Walenty. The first begins to develop such inhibitions owing to the influence of a higher intellectual milieu, of his social ideals, and mainly of his aspirations to self-development, and he tries to impart the same inhibitions to his friend—not very successfully, as it seems. Walenty appears here, as well as in his correspondence with the girls, as an effeminate, vain, impressionable person, devoid of self-control, and living for show.

2. Zygmunt is not a peasant, but a workman. It is therefore not strange if very few of the typical peasant attitudes are found in him. But it seems strange that not even the workman psychology can characterize him. He has indeed workman ideas, explicitly socialistic, and a few attitudes which could hardly be found in another class, but his stock of traditional characters is very limited. This is the fundamental difference between him and such men as Maks or Wacław Markiewicz, who in order to climb the

But please forgive me this fault, for I could not answer because of lack of time.

Respected sir! I send you my hearty thanks for your letter, so dear to my heart. Sir! You wrote so wonderfully and charmingly about love that your letter may be read with a true satisfaction. I tell you that more than one renowned poet could envy you this faculty. For who, who would represent to himself love so attractively? (Perhaps only the man who has already once loved.) But as to myself, I do not believe much in it, for love is often deceitful and without reciprocity, though it happens that it is also holy and innocent; yet in these times that is very seldom. Respected sir! You write me precisely that you feel unhappy to the highest degree because of not possessing the reciprocity of Miss ——. Sir! You ought not to lose hope, you ought not to give yourself up to despair. Only you ought to try with all your power that everything might be again as it was before. And because you are a man, all this will come easily. Respected sir! The greatest burden fell from my heart at the moment when I learned from your letter that you have not yet a betrothed. In that case I won't be afraid lest——

Respected sir! I never thought that your heart and your reciprocal love must be conquered with such difficulty as you write. If so, it seems to me that nobody will conquer your heart, for a woman has not strength enough for such a heroic effort, while a man—— Please tell me with what weapons can your heart be conquered? Whether with humility, or with jealousy, or with flattery, or with kindness, etc.? Or with the most dangerous arms of a woman—tears? Please write me, with what? Perhaps I will adapt myself. Respected, sir! You ask whether "I have at least a spark of love?" Sir! If I knew how to give love such a charming shape, how to make it so beautiful, it is possible that you would—— Alas! The gracious Heaven did not grant me any poetical faculty. So I can tell you only one word—that I . . . . . ["love you" omitted, but marked by as many points as there are letters in the respective Polish words] more than my life. But these words are not cold although breathing simplicity. Although they are short, yet for a lov[er] they contain very, very much. Respected sir, I beg you very much, answer me kindly by a letter soon. For I shall wait for it with an enormous impatience and lon[ging]. Your letter is the only medicine against my lon[ging]. Oh, blessed be the hour in which I knew you. I owe this happiness

given to letter-writing and to the photographs—all this is purely peasant. Even the closeness of the familial relation is so.

Jula's letters are the only example we have of a mere friendly correspondence between girl and boy. In all other cases there is either family-relation or flirtation, or at least a relation preliminary to an eventual engagement. None of all these relations exists here. Such a correspondence as we find here would be hardly possible in a pure peasant milieu.

695–747, TO WALENTY PIOTROWSKI, IN AMERICA, FROM VARIOUS PERSONS IN POLAND. 695–705, FROM STASIA G.; 706–17, FROM HANKA; 718–36, FROM ZYGMUNT; 737–40, FROM HENRYK; 741–42, FROM A. P.; 743–45, FROM JULA; 746–47, FROM THE PARENTS OF WALENTY

695 ZAGŁOBA, June 9, 1912

RESPECTED SIR: I thank you very, very much for the card. For indeed I don't know how I merited your remembrance. There is no news with me, except that I long for Rytwiany, and still more for your society, in which my time was spent so pleasantly and agreeably as it never can be spent in Zagłoba.

Andzia [Hanka] intends to go to Rytwiany for a church festival. I should be glad to go, but alas! my duties don't allow me to take this pleasure.

I should like to write more, but I must be satisfied with this until we get better acquainted, or rather until you know me better, for I know already very well your upright character from the representation of Andzia, and also a little personally. *Then* I shall write you very much, though I don't know whether it will give you any pleasure. . . . .

STASIA G.

696 August 2, 1912

RESPECTED SIR: In the introduction to my letter I beg your pardon very much for daring to delay my answer for so long a time.

news at all. Only I beg you for a kind answer, for which I shall be very grateful to you.

With respect,
STASIA G.

698 November 18, 1912

RESPECTED SIR: I inform you that I had the happiness to receive the letter which you sent me from America. For this letter and for your remembering me I express to you my hearty thanks.

Respected sir! What good did you gain by leaving your country? You were getting on here pretty well; why do you search for happiness among foreign gods? It seems to me that here in Poland it can also be found. But this depends upon the form in which one finds it. Some people consider happiness in the form of money, others in the form of something else. You belong surely to the former, since everybody goes to America only for money. But money does not always give happiness. With my whole heart I wish you may put aside much, much money and come back to our country as soon as possible. How long do you intend to stay in America? Have you any friend there, or do you spend your time lonely? You are very impolite, for you did not write any letter for so long a time, and this one which you sent could therefore have been written somewhat more at length. And in general you used to write your letters in a somewhat different way. Evidently America is beginning to change you. But alas! not for the better. In your letter you mentioned something about a photograph. So, if you are so gracious, I would ask for it very urgently and the soonest possible. I am curious whether America has changed you. It could not have changed you for the better, for in your person culminate all the good qualities, and in general you can be counted among the best, etc. You will think probably that this is an empty compliment, but I speak the sincere truth. And I am not the only one who has this opinion about your person, but another very near to your heart, Miss A[ndzia], also praises you to the skies. There is no news with me, everything is as it was. I am not marrying yet, for nobody wants me.

Up to the time I received your letter I was very longing and sad. But your letter rejoiced me completely. And if I receive your photograph also I shall feel completely happy.

If you spend as few hours on your work as you write, then I beg you to write me many letters, at least twice a month; it would not be

to Andzia and I am infinitely grateful to her for having made me acquainted with you. I commend myself to your kind memory.

Respectfully yours,

STASIA G.

More news about you, respected sir, A[ndzia] will furnish me, for I don't yet know anything certain. I will write her a letter on Sunday.

And perhaps there is no woman who is worthy of possessing your heart? In such a case—— I beg your pardon. [Irony.]

697 September 9, 1912

RESPECTED SIR: I received your letter and your cards, for which I thank you much. I beg your pardon for having let you wait so long for my letters. But I hope that you won't take it in bad part, for it was difficult for me to answer, having such a terrible sorrow, about which you heard probably from Miss Anna [Hanka].

Respected sir! Your letter before the last one grieved me much, for you wrote it with a terrible irony; every word in this letter wounds my heart profoundly. But what can I do? I tried to be sincere and open-hearted, and you took all this for false money. But now I will calculate my words, in order surely not to offend you for the second time.

Again, with your last letter you comforted me much. Respected sir! You write me not to mind that you did not inform me about your leaving Wil——. I did not mind it at all, for I understand and know the proverb, "The heart is not a servant" . . . . But at any rate it would be more agreeable for me if I had received the news also. And so I learned only by accident, from Andzia, that you had left.

It is painful to me that you have so bad an opinion of me, that you believe me deceitful. Oh, no! I am completely constant, inconstancy is unknown to me. In order to make you sure of it I should like to give you a proof, but unhappily I don't know in what way to do it, and for that very reason you can be sure. For if I knew it would be a sign that I have spoken already with somebody about things like this.

How do you spend your time? I think very pleasantly, because in the presence of your beloved. With my whole heart I wish you amusement and a pleasant passage of your time. I have no further

you have suspected me of anything like this, that I am so indelicate as not to answer your letters. You offended me much, for I did not even think about anything like this, much less realize it. I inform you that I send answers at once after receiving every one of your letters. Why you did not receive the former remains a puzzle to me. To your letter before the last I sent answers twice, but having no news from you I did not write any more. I thought that you were occupied with somebody and I did not want to interrupt a pleasant idyl with my tedious letters. In a word, I did not wish you to suspect me of importunity. This was the reason why I did not dare to send you wishes for New Year. Now please accept my late wishes. And I wish you to get as soon as possible renown and millions in America and to come as soon as possible back to our country.

I was pained when for so many months I had no letter from you. I thought that you had already forgotten. You ask me whether I wish to stop my correspondence with you. Sir! If it were possible, I would correspond with you steadily. But this evidently depends only upon you. I count my correspondence with you among the greatest pleasures. So I hope that you won't refuse me this pleasure, but that you will reciprocate by correspondence.

With me there is no news. I have not married yet, unfortunately, and it is not likely to happen soon, for it is now more and more difficult to find a husband.

What is the news with you? Do you remain a bachelor up to the present? I beg you once more, send me your photograph. In the name of my parents I thank you for the greetings which you sent. They reciprocate in the same way. . . . .

I commend myself to your kind memory.

With respect,

STASIA G.

P.S. I wish you to amuse yourself merrily during the whole carnival.

701 January 29, 1913

SIR: A month has passed and I have no news from you. Don't forget that a month has many, many more days when they are counted with impatience and anxiety. So I will still wait and deceive myself that perhaps I don't wait in vain.

STASIA G.

so very much. Is it true? I don't send you Christmas wishes yet, for surely you will write again before the holidays.

I have nothing more of interest to communicate. I wish you success and merry distraction with my whole heart. I beg you for a kind answer as soon as possible. I shall wait with long[ing] both for your letter and for your photograph. I send you a hearty handshake.

I remain always one and the same,

STASIA G.

699 December 4, 1912

INFLUENTIAL [WIELMOŻNY] SIR: I inform you that I had the honor of receiving from you a few days ago a new letter from America. [Letters sent; asks for answer.] Please describe to me everything. How do you succeed in America? Do you amuse yourself merrily? And then, when do you intend to come back to our country? And perhaps you think of remaining there forever? It would be a pity if you settled there. Rather come back to our country.

Please be so kind and send me your photograph. You asked whether I correspond with Miss Anna [Hanka]. Well, I must tell you that since you left Rytwiany, I sent her no less and no more, but eight letters. But she did not even begin to answer any of them. Then I ceased writing to her. And now I don't know at all what is going on with her. With me there is no news either. Mortal tediousness. Your letters are the only distraction for me. So I beg you very much, be so kind and write to me as soon as possible. With great longing I shall wait for your letter. And I beg you, don't refuse me this grace. Probably you will receive this letter before Christmas. So I send you my best wishes for the approaching holidays. I have nothing more to write, only I commend myself to your kind memory.

I remain always the same,

STASIA G.

P.S. I remind you about the photograph.

700 January 9, 1913

RESPECTED SIR: I inform you that I received your letter, for which I give you hearty thanks. Sir! I am very grateful to you for this letter. But while on the one hand you gave me much pleasure with it, on the other hand it was very painful to me. For how could

You ask me why I have not written to you for so long a time. Well, I must inform you that in this case I am not led by anything particular, only one day passes after another and then weeks pass. I am now somewhat occupied with work, for a few months ago I accepted the place of salesgirl in the local shop, so my duties are much greater. And so on working days I have no time, and Sunday passes so rapidly in amusing myself in a very agreeable society that I have absolutely never the time to think about correspondence. You write something about anger. I don't even think of being angry. God forbid! For in general I don't like to be angry with anybody. I prefer to live in harmony with everybody. As far as it seems to me you have no reason either to be offended with me. For if I don't write letters often it is not a cause to be angry. What is the news with you? How do you amuse yourself? As to me, you can envy me, for I spend the time very merrily. I have a small group, but well adapted to one another, and perfectly satisfying my demands.[1] I am just now writing to Andzia one letter after another, asking her to come also. But it seems to me that she will not come. In case she does not come, I intend to go to her when there is a parish-festival in Rytwiany. Perhaps then you will be present also? I have nothing more to write, I mention only that if you wish me to send you my photograph—for I have just been photographed—then please send me yours first. . . . . I beg you for a word of news.

With respect,

STASIA G.

P.S. I am charmed with these cards which you send me. If you are so kind, please send me more. Anything of the same kind. . . . .

[1] This letter is clearly intended to break off the relation. Particularly the phrases concerning her amusements and the "pleasant society" aim at this. And if we compare this letter with Hanka's letters in which she protests against suppositions that she is going into society, or excuses herself for having amused herself, we see the real meaning of social life and entertainment in this class—the same as in the peasant class, although still more evident in the latter. A social entertainment in which both sexes take part is seldom disinterested, as far as young people are concerned, i.e., the mere pleasure of society is never the real end. All parties are either traditional ceremonial meetings with a religious background (wedding, christening, funeral, holiday, festival) or they develop out of the reception of the eventual bridegroom or matchmaker in the eventual bride's house, and retain always the character of virtual or actual matching. This is the meaning of all

702 March 14, 1913

RESPECTED SIR: [Letters received.] I beg your pardon for not having answered your letters for so long a time. But please forgive me this momentary inconsistency. I could not answer sooner because I was very sick for almost a month, and in spite of my wish I was unable to answer sooner. But now, when I am in health, my first act is to take a pen in order to excuse myself to you. . . . . How do you spend your time? Certainly more merrily than I do, for in a city one can amuse himself better than in the country. With me everything is as formerly. I am bored, nothing more. And the time passes so monotonously. I have nothing more to write. . . . . I take the liberty of bidding you goodbye. . . . . I send you a hearty handshake.

With respect,

STASIA G.

703 May 14, 1913

RESPECTED SIR: I inform you that I received your letter, your cards, a photograph, and ribbons. . . . . Answer me please, how did I merit to be remembered by you so particularly? For besides the letters and the photograph, these ribbons have confused me, for I don't know, in fact, under what pretext I may accept them. They will be for me a very dear remembrance. I don't think that you will be angry.[1] As to the photograph, I thank you very much. It was a very pleasant surprise for me. I have asked for it so often, and nevertheless I did not receive it, and I thought already that I should not have the honor of owning your photograph; meanwhile, I received it on my name-day. I must confess that you look very well upon it. . . . . With me there is no news at all; always the old story. . . . .

I thank you once more for your kind remembrance . . . . and for all these objects, which caused me an incomparable pleasure.

With respect,

STACHA G.

704 [Without date]

RESPECTED SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I received your postcard a few days ago and your letter, for which I send you hearty thanks.

[1] She will treat them as a gift too precious to be used. Cf. the behavior of Hanka under similar circumstances (No. 716).

rôle is completely changed. So I must be satisfied with one thing. I have no more news. I bid you farewell, respected sir.

With respect,

STASIA G.

I beg you, do not refuse me this grace, and destroy all my letters.

706 RYTWIANY, November 8, 1912

RESPECTED SIR: Oh, how happy I feel after receiving your letter, for which I waited with much longing, but with uncertainty. I imagined that when you went to America, I should have to bid you farewell forever, so this day of separation was for me as [illegible; terrible?] a day as if I bade farewell to everything that was dear to me upon the earth, as if I were at the funeral of my happiness and nothing were left for me except to put on mourning and to wear it the rest of my life upon the earth.

Dear sir, I have no words to describe and I cannot even express all that I feel, so terrible is your departure for me. So whenever I met your brother, I always asked him to give me your address if you wrote first to your parents. I intended to write the first, but since I received a letter myself, I have your address. Dear *kum*,[1] you wrote me about those strikes, and while nobody knew yet that you wrote to me, on the same day I learned that you wrote to your parents also, and that your parents grieve very much about your being in such misery. It would be the best if you could refrain from writing to your parents [such things], for when you write you cause only grief, weeping, and nothing more. This is perfectly useless and your parents grieve enormously about you. But as to me, you can be sure that nobody will learn [that you have written] anything bad; if I tell anybody that you wrote I will always say that it is all right. For not even my parents know what you write to me. As to the money, you may not trouble yourself, for we don't need it. You will give it back when you can. You may keep it with you, for in the case of some accident it may always be useful. Don't send it back until you think that you are in such a good condition as no longer to be afraid of misery. [Send it] only then, or else I would be ready to send it back. Dear friend, you ask about Miss Stanisława

[1] Probably the god-relation exists, if at all, only between the parents of the boy and girl, and she transfers it half jokingly to their relation.

705 [July or August 1913]

RESPECTED SIR: . . . . You ask me what is the news with me. Well, first I must inform you that I am getting married. This information will not be news to you, for from your letter I learned that you are very well informed about it. I wonder who was so serviceable and saved me the trouble of informing you about this fact. Excuse me for not informing you about it sooner, but I did not believe myself that it would happen. My banns have only just been published, and the wedding will be on August 10. You wonder that I am getting married so young. But I believe, on the contrary, that it is time for me to get married. I have begun my eighteenth year already, twenty is not so far, and I am very much afraid of remaining an old maid. Moreover, I don't marry because forced to, only from love. I get an ideal husband, who satisfies all my demands —modest enough, evidently. You are interested to know whence my future husband comes? He was born in the province of Radom, and educated in Warsaw. We have known each other more than a year and a half, for he now works in Zagłoba. He is a railway engineer and locksmith. We will not remain here long. I think that we shall go to Warsaw. I regret very much that you are not in our country. I hope that you would not have refused me the pleasure and would have been at my wedding. While now, unhappily, too wide a space divides us.

I intended to go to Rytwiany, but now I will not go, for Andzia will come.

I have nothing more to write you. I want only to beg your pardon if I ever caused you any pain, and to ask your forgiveness. Write me that you are not angry with me. But I believe that I have not merited your anger.

Perhaps this is the last letter which I shall write you. For now of what use would my letters be to you? Surely they would give you no pleasure, for as long as I was a girl it was different, but now my

---

the receptions in private houses (outside of ceremonial festivals), of all dances, walks, etc. Therefore a girl or a boy "amusing" himself is always understood to be in search of a match, and therefore a girl or a boy engaged or half-engaged ought never to "go into society" or to seek "amusement" when the other is absent. Stacha's explicit acknowledgment that she amuses herself means therefore that she no longer expects a proposal from Walenty, but is in search of another match or even already engaged.

letter which made upon you a sad impression and took away from you a merry moment in which you could have felt yourself happy. Though you may be confident that the feelings which I share with you are sincere. I live alone also. I keep company with absolutely nobody, I go nowhere, to no parties, and nobody comes to me, so I have got accustomed to being interested in no society. I take no walks either. If I have a moment free, I spend it in reading books. If you do not believe me I can confidently appeal to your brother. He can inform you. Dear sir! perhaps you will not believe what I write, but I feel such a lack of you that I can never forget for a moment what you did in going to America. When you were in Rytwiany I walked every evening, I wanted always to see you, to exchange a few words, and so I spent my time pleasantly. But now it is a veritable grave in Rytwiany for me. But nothing can be done, I must accept my fate and be patient, and perhaps our Lord God will grant moments like those to return again. What do you think? I should have much to write, but I am afraid, for you begin immediately to think too much, and something still worse may result from it. If I thought about you and about a stranger [the writer] at the same time it would be too much for you. Why, you find yourself in a rather disagreeable situation, for if you are not working, you have enough to think about.

Dear sir, I want to justify myself, so that you will forgive me for having postponed my answer somewhat long. My sir, on the evening when I received your letter my mother was very sick. She almost struggled with death; so I was very much impressed with it. Moreover, during the whole night I ran like mad, now to the surgeon-assistant, now again to the factory, to my father, and so on. I had to go wherever it was necessary. I did not cover myself as I ought to in winter, only as if it were spring, and I caught a rather serious cold, so that I was afraid I should go to the cemetery. But I was well cared for at once, and in some way it passed off, so that I am in good health now. Mother cannot yet rise from her bed, for she is very weak. I won't bore you longer with this story, I only wanted to explain to you why I did not answer at once. It was only because I was sick, and my mother was even very sick; so I could not write, for I had no time.

And now I inform you what you asked me about. Stacha writes to me very seldom, for when she does I have never any time to answer her. But now I have written to her and I asked whether she had

[Stasia]. I don't know anything, for since she wrote me that letter which you saw, she afterward wrote only one postcard. After your departure I wrote her a letter, registered, and she did not answer. Then I wrote 2 cards, and she did not answer either. Sister-in-law has written me two letters already, and she [Stasia] did not. So I don't write to her any more and don't intend to unless she writes to me. Then I will inform you about anything. If you want me to be the intermediary [between you] further I will sacrifice myself [half ironical?] with pleasure. Dear sir, please excuse me for not having answered at once, but you understand that I desire so much to answer you immediately, on the same day on which I receive your letter. But everything was so unfavorable that I could not answer at once, and now I have answered you, but not to everything. My mother has been sick with inflammation of the kidneys for 5 weeks, and I am so occupied with the household and with sewing that really it is difficult for me to afford writing a letter. You must comply with it, and you will kindly forgive me. In the next [letter] I will write more and I will try [to write] a little better, for I wrote this one so badly that I am ashamed to send it. Really I don't know what is the fault, whether the pen is bad, or the ink, or the one who wrote. Probably it is my fault, that I don't know how to write [nicely], but I will try some day. We thank you heartily for having sent the photograph, for from sister we had a letter in which they wrote that they received your photograph and letter, and asked me to come.

Greetings from my parents, and from me hearty embraces. [The Polish word for "shake" (hands) and "embrace" is the same—from *ściskać*, "to press." Here it means formally "handshake," really "embrace."] I beg you for a kind answer.

[Your] l . . . . . [oving],

ANNA [HANKA]

707 January 30, 1913

DEAR SIR: I inform you that I received on January 16 the letter for which I had waited with great impatience and uncertainty. I send you a hearty "God reward" for it, and for the good wishes. Dear sir, that letter comforted me very much, so I thank you very much for the reciprocal feelings expressed in it, and about which I doubted much, for you did not give any sign for so long a time. Dear sir, I am really very pained and I regret very much that I sent you a

description. I am tortured. Wherever I look—emptiness everywhere. Always I feel the lack of someone. Nothing can make me cheerful. Nothing except this one thought, when I remember that perhaps sometime we shall see each other. But this will not come soon probably, will it? And I do not know how I shall be able to live thus any longer. I imagine it will not be very cheerful. But nothing can be done. I must accept my fate.

Then I want to know of your health. I am in good health, thanks to our Lord God, and I wish you the same, with a true heart. I beg you, deign to inform me how you are succeeding, how you spend your moments, whether merrily, surrounded by pretty foreigners or acquaintances. I am curious what influence [impression] the American girls have made upon you? I think not a bad one, for there all the women are elegant, though I should not envy them, for perhaps I could also be in their company. My sister in America and her husband wrote me. I received their letter this week. They ask me to come without fail. They almost implore me. Moreover, my sir, they wrote me that they had there for me a boy who knew me from my photograph, and is so rich, for he has $2,000, and when I came, he would marry me at once. But I answered them that if he had so many thousands let him search for a wife more worthy of him, for I will not marry for the sake of thousands, but of love. I always repeat it to myself, that happiness is only in love, not in any amount of money, for money is a thing which may be acquired, while nothing will change me. I asked them where he got his assurance that I would marry him at once, since he let them write so? It is not enough that I pleased him, for I don't know him, and I don't know whether he would please me. Well, I don't know what they will answer to this. In this way, dear sir, I could have seen America. But I don't know whether this nice gentleman who is so sure of himself will still want me after what I answered them, and so I have a fresh grief. [Irony.]

With the approaching Easter holidays I wish you the fulfilment of your dearest wishes and merry amusement in the most numerous society possible.[1] But please do not forget your truly l[oving]

HANKA

[1] This paragraph shows clearly the modesty of Hanka's claims. A girl claiming exclusive rights to the man would never wish him "merry amusement in a numerous society," because of the meaning of social entertainments, explained above.

written to you. I don't know yet what she will answer. As to Miss N., we are not angry with each other, but we don't keep company since I came from Zagłoba. Only when we meet, we have to talk with each other. Since you left I have spoken only 3 times with her. She is [pretends to be] a lady, and I cannot bear such people. [Information about acquaintances.]

Your lov[ing],

ANNA

708 February 18, 1913

WORTHY FRIEND: I inform you that I received 2 letters and a card. [One page about writing letters and answering.] Your brother is very anxious lest you marry some pretty American girl, and I think also much about it, that perhaps you will fall in love and get into a marriage bond there in America. [News about marriages and acquaintances]. T. Sz. wrote that she does not wish to her worst enemy to make the journey to America. She was very seasick upon the ship, and in America she is immeasurably homesick. My brother wrote now that if I wanted to see America he would take me in the spring. But I would decide to go solely in order to see more often my beloved, i.e., my *kum*, but my parents don't allow me to dream about America, and mother faints at the mention of it. So it seems that I shan't see America. As long as my parents are alive I must remain nearer to them. [Repeats the news about Miss N. playing a lady; news about other friends.]

[HANKA]

709 March 2, 1913

DEAR SIR: I inform you that I answered your letters very long ago, and I am sure that you must have received them. And you don't deign to answer me.

Dear! In spite of not receiving any answer, I cannot wait longer, for my heart which is wounded since the moment of your departure shows me itself the way to pen a few words far away beyond the sea, where the man is who could heal it. [Evidently imitated.] But when, when? Alas!

Now I sit musing alone and I think how often I had the pleasure of spending such evenings as this one in talking with you. Oh, how pleasant it was to live then! Today the tediousness is beyond

Then I inform you, dear *kum*, about my dear health and success. Well, thanks to God the Highest, I am in good health, and I wish you the same with my whole heart and soul. As to my success, it is not the worst, but I cannot say that it is good. We live so as to push misery before us and to go along in some way or other, though it is useless for me to describe it. You know how it has always been in Rytwiany, and so it is now. I work faithfully, but I have little profit from my work. Therefore I am so discouraged that I don't even want to work, although, to tell the truth, I did not get discouraged [merely] because I profit little from my work. You are probably curious why. Well, if I may tell you, or rather confess truly, I have been in so strange a disposition for some time that wherever I go, wherever I look, I see nothing which amuses or distracts me. I remember only the moments long ago which we often spent so pleasantly together. Everything makes upon me such a painful impression that really life itself has no attraction for me. I am so lonely that I would go to the end of the world to find the person who is so dear to me and to confess this terrible torture and suffering which my heart suffers after the loss of the person who made a glimmering small spark in my heart glow into a burning fire of love. [Evidently from a romance.] And your absence has made it [the love] so strong that nobody will be able to separate [me from you].

Dear Mr. Walenty! How did you spend your holidays, merrily or not? For I, though I was in my *kum's* [Walenty's parents] and our neighbors' houses and they were in our house, yet I only pretended to be merry, and in reality I was as sad as I seemed merry. Nothing amused me. I did it only in order not to make any enemies, else I would have gone nowhere. On the third day of Easter your mother, my *kum*, was with us. The time passed pleasantly enough. Your brother was to come; I looked for him during the whole holidays, but he did not come. Whenever I meet him I ask him to come, but he always promises me and never comes. I have already abused him a little, but he does not seem to be very much afraid of me. Your mother, Mr. Walenty, is in despair about your going so far away, and because she cannot see her dear son. Dear *kum*, really I envy you that your mother loves you so much, even more than my own mother loves me. That a man should have such luck with certain persons, is really to be envied. I told your mother not to grieve, that our Lord God will help her to live until you come with some pretty rich

710 [Probably end of March or beginning of April 1913]

DEAR *Kum:* You write that I have forgotten you already, for I don't write to you. Oh, it never was so and I am sure that it never can happen, for it is not permitted to forget about such a true friend as you are to me. You suspect me of getting married perhaps, and that therefore I don't write. It is awful to tease in so terrible a way one who can love nobody besides you and who certainly would never decide to marry some man whom she could never love! And even if I married, I could not always feign that I love him, while thinking about someone else. This would not be right. It is much better to suffer now instead of suffering later, making somebody else suffer besides, and betraying him—which would be more probable than the contrary. Therefore I promised myself to marry no sooner than you come from America, and perhaps not at all. Since you went to this unhappy America, I prepare myself seriously for the life of an old maid, and as far as it seems, I shan't be deceived. . . . .

Please don't forget me and write as soon as possible. Your letters are my only comfort and distraction. . . . . And don't write me any more that you bore me with your letters, for it offends me much. I wait for your letters as for salvation, and you write such taunts. . . . .

Your loving,

HANKA

711 [April] 30, 1913

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to inform you that before the holidays, on Good Thursday, I received your letter with the wishes, and 3 cards. Today I received another letter and I am very much pleased. After reading these letters I feel very happy. Because your letters, dear *kum*, make upon me a very kind impression. I read them with great pleasure every evening, for they alone can calm my heart. For these letters, so dear to me, and for your reciprocal feelings expressed in them, I have the honor to thank you heartily, dear *kum*. For the cards I give you also a hearty "God reward." I should be glad to thank you in a more hearty manner, but really I don't know how to express how grateful I feel to you, dear *kum*, for these cards, for they have a great value for me and I will keep them in remembrance. I am very much pained that I cannot reciprocate in the same way, but it seems to me that our Kingdom has no cards like these.

would be happy then. Though perhaps it is so, I think that still if you come back and the persons whom you know stand before your eyes, then you will be obliged to live as we do now, my Walek. Dear Walek, you ask me what is the use of my longing for you. I see that you don't like it much, since you advise me to gather society [about me]. Well, I will try to do it as I can, for up to the present I have still none. And to you, my Walek, I won't describe any more my feelings, even if I am mad with despair. Now I will only describe what is the news in Rytwiany, and in general about acquaintances. Do you agree to it? I must still mention about that unknown American. As to this, you can be calm, my Walek, that you won't have any rival. The matter is not about some marvel of beauty that there might be rivalry. The one from America does not write since I answered them, and here in Rytwiany and the neighborhood nobody gives any attention to me. . . . .

Your truly loving,

HANKA

713 June 4 [1913]

DEAR WALEK: . . . . I see from your letters and you also write me on these postcards some reproaches about something. I see that for some time you are very nervous. I don't understand why. You write to me with so great "respect" that really it causes me great pain. If you think, my Walek, that it is not suitable for us to write "thou" to one another, say so, for it was I who began it, and I can change it. I will write you in the same way as you write on the cards. Listen, my Walek! You are offended because I did not write you what you asked—what people say about you. Well, my dear, I tried to do it. I saw Mr. M. and Mr. Dz. and in general the others, and I began to speak with them about different subjects, and I did not notice anything. Everybody expressed himself so well about you that there is no suspicion whatever [of their thinking anything bad]. So I noticed, at least. As to Mr. M. who lives near the main road, I have spoken with him more than once, and I hear also from Hela P., who always tells me what she knows about you from M. As far as I know, M. always expresses himself in a very flattering manner; he does not find words enough to praise you and he speaks always of you as of a progressive man. And what other people say, never mind. Let them talk. You cannot be an exception, my Walek. They have

American, i.e., daughter-in-law, and she will feel happy by the side of your wife. I see that your mother has nothing against it; on the contrary, she says that she would like to see you happy, and to have a daughter-in-law. Dear Mr. Walenty, I thank you much for the money which you sent back, but I am much astonished that you were so anxious about these few roubles and sent them so hurriedly. You hurried quite uselessly. It would be better if you had kept them until I go to America; then you could send them for my journey.

Dear Mr. Walenty, I won't write any more today, but in the next letter. I have been sitting too long already. It is night, one o'clock, and if my mother awakes she will scold me for not sleeping. My parents send you greetings and salutations, and I a hot kiss.

Thy truly loving,

HANKA

712 May 20, 1913

RESPECTED SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I received your letter and your photograph, for which I give you a hearty "God reward."

Dear Mr. Walenty! How glad I am that at every moment I can look at least upon a picture of a person so dear to my heart. Dear Walek! I lack the words to express how happy I felt after receiving those photographs and also after reading your letter, for this letter, written by you,[1] my Walek, is my only comfort. Perhaps you are offended with me for having postponed the answer, but if you knew, my Walek, how sad it is to live without you, you would not wait for an answer, but would come yourself. Then I am sure that I could send a letter to you to Rytwiany every day, while now, when I sit down to write a letter to you, my dear, I first read all your letters, and before I think what to write a late hour approaches and so a day passes after another. Today I at last decided to pen a few words which might assure you that I love you more than life. But what of it, since God the Merciless separated us and condemned to long sufferings? Though this which happened, my Walek, is your fault only, for I did whatever I could; it was not suitable for me to do more. But you did not mind anything. You believed that if you went to America you would forget there your country and your friends and

[1] At this point Hanka uses the form "thee" (used also at the end of the preceding letter), and continues to use "thee" and "thou" to the end.

I envy her, for they love each other much. And Stefcia feels as happy as if she were in the seventh heaven. I was at her wedding, but I did not amuse myself very merrily. I did not want to go at all, ... but it was impossible, for she was dressed in my home and she refused to go without me. I wanted to go as a guest, but they refused also, and at last I had to agree to be a best maid. I had a groom [best man] for whom I did not care at all. It was a certain Mr. S. Well, never mind how it was, but he asked for my hand even there, without waiting, but I asked him how old he was, and I told him that he was too young for such things, let him still grow to be a comfort to his mamma. . . . .[1] I envy you very much, my dear, your spending your time there so merrily. Who knows whether I won't go to you some day. . . . .

I send you a few kisses.

Your loving,

HANKA

714 June 30, 1913

RESPECTED SIR: I inform you that I am now in Zagłoba. Before leaving Rytwiany I received your letter with wishes, and at the same time a ribbon, for which I thank you heartily. From Rytwiany I sent you a letter. When you receive it, please answer me. I wait for your answer in Rytwiany. What is the news with you? With me nothing. I am healthy, and merry enough in Zagłoba.[2]

With respect,

HANKA

715 July 20, 1913

MY DEAR WALEK: . . . . Forgive my postponing my answer, but I am in so strange a mood that even today I don't know how to arrange the letter, what to begin with and what to end with in the writing of this letter. First I must begin with the beginning. Well,

[1] The wedding-festival, like all ceremonies with a religious source, has primitively not the same meaning as non-ceremonial social entertainments; it does not involve matchmaking. To be at a wedding-festival is not a matter of choice, but to some extent a matter of obligation. The only and important exception concerns the best men and best maids, who are usually paired with regard to a possible marriage. This explains why Hanka, in her desire to be absolutely faithful to Walek, tries to avoid being a best maid, while she cannot refuse to be at the festival.

[2] Postcard; ceremonial form.

something to say about everybody, so what does it matter if they talk a little about you also? And you, my Walek, be a little less sensitive about these things. It will be better for you. Don't be impressed with such things, for it is not worth while.[1] You ask me, my Walek, whether I will go to Zagłoba. Well, be calm, for if it matters anything to you, perhaps I won't go, for I am not very anxious to go there and my parents don't allow me either, only Stacha always asks me to come, and my sister-in-law wants me also to come and to see her new son, who will be only 3 months old on June 8. I did not want to go as a *kuma* [of the sister=godmother of the baby], so they want me to come now to them, and only then they will come to Rytwiany with all their children, and Stasia also intends to come. But probably I won't go. Dear Walek! I am curious why you do not want me to go to Zagłoba. Surely you have nothing to fear, for I am not a man and I won't fall in love with Stasia, and if I read the letters which you wrote to her it would be nothing, for I know even now what you write to her and still I don't mind it. On the contrary, I am pleased that you correspond with each other. So be calm about this, for nothing bad will result from it. Don't be angry, my dear, for I feel that there is something the matter with you, but really I don't know what. I should be very grateful to you for kindly informing me. Dear Walek! You write me something about burning of photographs, so I beg you very much, don't write such things any more, for they cause me great pain unless you want to tease me, then do. . . . . So, my dear Walek, if you burn my photograph, I will do then as you advise me to do. Then you ask me whether I have well-suited company. Up to the present I have none and I don't know what will be further on. What does it mean, this well-suited company? For, so to speak, I am too stupid, I cannot understand what it means. And I am also at a guess to know why you asked me to answer you during this season. I don't know what is the matter at this point, for I have written more than once during this summer and before the season ends you will receive more than one letter from me, and you will even not want to answer me any more, for you will certainly be bored if I begin to write too much. There is no news at all, everything is the same. Only this is new, that Miss Nowak is married.

[1] The fellow is exceptionally vain, but his interest in public opinion is perfectly normal and typical for his class. Its origin lies in peasant life, not in town life. The attitude of the girl is above the normal, in this respect as in others, and even she is later most profoundly affected by the gossip about herself.

is quiet, but she sleeps only if they make her sleep with powders. But when she has slept for these hours, she awakes and has convulsions so constantly that three persons have to hold her in bed. She asks herself to be held for she would kill herself if she hit her head. She is quite conscious and knows everything. She knows that her nerves and heart torment her so, and when anyone comes she asks him to pray that she may die and suffer no longer. Yesterday, when she could still speak, she called me and told me everything, how she wanted to be dressed for death and how I was to sew her dress. She wants me to do everything. Do you know, Walek, that I am already so afraid of her that instead of going to Zagłoba later I shall go perhaps this week. I am so tired with her that I am even afraid of her, for she calls me continually, and therefore perhaps later she will come to me.[1] Then I inform you, my Walek, that Stasia writes me one letter after another, asking me to come to her wedding. The banns have been proclaimed already, and the marriage-ceremony will be on August 10. My brother and his wife write also, asking me to come and stay for a longer time, and have some vacation. I intend to go this week and will remain there about a month. You wrote, my Walek, making a supposition about falling in love. Well, you can be perfectly calm, for I love only you and I am not going there to hunt for a husband, but only to get some rest, and to give Stasia the pleasure of being at her wedding. I will not dance much, for mother wrote already to my brother to take care of me and not let me amuse myself too wildly and catch cold again. So even if I wished it they won't allow me. I foresee that you will be offended, dear W., with my going to this wedding, but you see that I cannot excuse myself. If I had not my brother's home there I would not go, but since they write also, why should I not, if they give me to eat?

I am sure, my Walek, that you won't be satisfied with this letter, for I only worry you. But I must describe to you what pains me the most. It is this, dear Walek, that you could believe some finished [absolute] fool about my having walked with Kawal. and Kacz.! I don't say that I am above them, but I tell you, my Walek, that no friendship unites me with these boys. I have never in my life spoken with Kawal. and I am not acquainted with him at all. As to Kacz.,

[1] After her death, as a ghost, because in her last moments she has been particularly attached to Hanka, and because this attachment itself in a person sick with such a strange disease must have had some abnormal, "uncanny" character.

my Walek, I won't describe it to you so exactly, for I should have to write for a whole week and there is not time enough. And I am sure that you know already everything, for probably somebody has written to you. First I inform you that I was in Cracow. I should never have gone, the idea would not even have come to my head to go to Cracow, were it not for this, that Mrs. Rog. went to bring her daughter Stasia and they persuaded me and I went with her. I wished to see whether it is possible to live in the farther world, not in Rytwiany only. Well, and it seems to me that it is better to live anywhere than in Rytwiany. On this occasion I called on a doctor in Cracow, for I caught cold in the winter, and I did not care for being cured; I did not believe in it. Then I went to the wedding of Staśka N. and I fixed myself better still [I got worse] through dancing, for I had to dance more than the other girls. I did not mind it either until my side began to ache severely. Only then a doctor was called. He frightened me by saying there would be inflammation of the lungs, and talked a great deal, but gave me no medicine at all, only some powders and cupping-glasses. But this helped little. So the doctor in Cracow, after examining me, told me that it was a very [illegible word] cold and gave me medicines, and now I am getting much better. But since I came back whoever meets me asks why I was in Cracow. When I tell them that I called on a doctor, they say everywhere that I am sick with consumption. And I don't say anything, for what shall I say to stupid people who think that since I went to Cracow there can be nothing else but consumption? I only laugh at it and say, let them blame me, so that no boy will want to marry me.[1] I should be very glad, for I don't want anybody to call on me or to court me. And Stasia Rog. is sick with a nervous disease, so everybody says already that she has gone mad. But she does not even dream of going mad, for this needs some time, while she is already so bad that for three days she has been in convulsions. The doctors say that if she lives until the ninth day, this can pass, but if not, she will die on one of these days. I sit with her continually, for she does not allow anybody to be with her except me and Kazia, and she does not want to take any medicine from anybody except me. I tell you, Walek, people say that nobody has yet seen such a disease. When she sleeps she

[1] The attitude toward sickness seems to be exactly the same as toward some moral fault or sin (cf. Fryzowicz series). This evidently goes back to the peasant life, and still further back to the identification of sickness with possession by the evil principle, of which we find numerous traces in the peasant language and magic.

Really I have not words enough to thank, for it is very nice. I wished to take it for my hat, but mother did not allow me; she told me to keep it as a token, and so I did. My Walek, really I don't know any other way to thank you, but when you come, you can ask for something [kisses]. Is it all right?

Then, you write, dear Walek, about some boys of Zagłoba, who are absolutely indifferent to me. First, G. married during the carnival. He got a woman like a *cacko* [originally child's toy; now any small elegant article], so evidently I could not flirt with him for his wife would have seen it at once. It was at his wedding that Stacha got acquainted with her husband, or rather she did not get acquainted, for they have known each other since last year, but fell in love with him. I don't know how true it is, but she told me that they loved each other very much. He is 30 years old. Believe me, Walek, that notwithstanding everything about him, notwithstanding he is quite well to do and rather fine looking, yet his character and his whole behavior don't please me at all. It must be a courageous woman to risk marrying him. Well, but they have like characters and she is also energetic and will not let herself be too much subjected. Well, it will be as it will be. Now they love each other and before the wedding they loved each other also. When Stacha related it to me, I only listened and learned from her. I wondered whence such an innocent being got so much boldness and experience. Well, and soon. The festival was very large, all the workmen and employees were there, and at the marriage-ceremony also, and they amused themselves during the whole night. Some of them were with their wives, and the bachelors flirted on a very large scale with whomever they could. When I dressed Stacha in her wedding-dress, she was so wonderfully beautiful, that I had to say, "If Mr. Walenty saw you now, I don't know what would happen." I teased her as much as I could, for why did she write to you since she had a betrothed? I minded it very much. Moreover she received from you a card with [wedding] wishes which I stole from her. I have it now. Perhaps some day I will adapt a similar one [to the occasion] and send it to you.

Walek, my dear! You write me so much about this Zagłoba. It is true that I wrote you that I felt very gay. Tell me, if I had written as soon as I got there that I was sad you would have said, "If she was going to be worried, she would not have gone." Is it not true? So at first, in the circle of my family who love me so much, I felt gay,

once he was in our house in the winter with your brother, and they accompanied the girls who sew with me. Since then I have not spoken with him at all. I only want to know who wrote you this tale. I would not treat him very politely, for it disparages me greatly when it is said that a band of boys is walking after me and moreover throwing dirty words. Really, Walek, I cannot live through it. I am in such a mood that sometimes I rage with anger, sometimes again cry. How can people speak badly about me when nobody ever sees me? . . . . If I am so lightly treated in Rytwiany, I ought not to live at all, for why should I? If a poor girl loses her opinion [good name] it is almost as much as if she killed herself.[1] . . . .

I kiss you.

HANKA

I have not seen your mother, but my parents and yours were together at a fair and treated themselves so well that my father got quite drunk.

716 September 10 [1913]

MY DEAR WALEK: I will mention first your preceding letter in which you sent me a ribbon. I thank you for it heartily, my Walek.

[1] It is an interesting problem whether the origin of the enormous importance which any bad gossip assumes in the eyes of the person gossiped about does not lie in the primitive magical belief in the real influence of words. We have an analogy in the importance ascribed to the curse. The expression of any bad wish provokes the utmost wrath, and bad gossip seems to be (in addition to its ordinary social meaning) a weaker and less explicit form of the curse. This supposition seems to be corroborated by two facts. First, there is always an apparent disproportion between the content of the gossip and the reaction which it provokes in the wronged person. Even if we take into account the fear of ridicule which makes the sting of trifling gossip particularly sharp, there remains the fact that the reaction is always too strong if judged from the objective standpoint. The most vainglorious man of the intelligent class will hardly react to a bit of gossip which would exasperate a not at all conceited peasant. Again, some old proverbs and customary sayings, show a tendency to neutralize the magical influence of bad words by denying them any meaning, by treating them as mere noise, likening them to the blowing of the wind, by assimilating them to the voices of animals of good omen (the dog, the magpie), and by denying that they can reach heaven or God—just as a curse is neutralized. Evidently this neutralization is quite different from a negation of the fact itself stated in the gossip.

All this does not mean that the reaction toward gossip is not now mainly determined by the purely social attitude, only that this social attitude may have been preceded by a more primitive magical one and that the traces of this magical attitude linger still unconsciously behind the explicit desire for social appreciation.

717 October 8, 1913

DEAR WALEK: I inform you that I received your card for which—for which I thank you heartily, and . . . . and [kiss you]. My dear Walek! I should really prefer if you came. Then I could explain [express] myself once, and I think that you would believe in my feelings, while as it is, notwithstanding my effusions, you always imagine something, that I betray you, and you always suspect me. The same about that card I sent you from Zagłoba. I could not have written otherwise, for Stacha was there, and I would not let her know what relations our correspondence includes, for I told her always that nothing but friendship unites us, and therefore I did not wish to betray myself. And even if I had confessed, what could I boast of, unless something of which I am not sure? Even if I had told her that I "love" you, she would surely have asked me, "And does he reciprocate?" What could I have answered her, since I don't know myself?

For in truth, my Walek, you must agree with me that—I don't say now, but formerly—when you were still in Rytwiany, certainly not the smallest spark of love for me glowed in your heart. I say it from my own conviction. When I could suffer no more, I resolved to confess to you what had tormented me for so long a time. Well, and probably from pity, you have tried to reciprocate. I love you madly for it, for not having trampled my feelings, for having a little pity on me. And I will write you something more; I hope that you will not be offended with me, as once with Stacha, do you remember? Well, long ago I wanted to ask you, my Walek, but I had no courage to do it sooner. When do you think of coming back to our country?

You want me, dear Walek, to tell you something about Zagłoba. [News without importance.] I don't know what more to write. If you come some day, I will perhaps tell you something fresh, for now in Rytwiany I don't see anything worth communicating. The eyes ache to look at this stupidity, therefore I don't go for any walks, but I sit of evenings and read. Even so I hear enough of this gaiety through the window. I wait for an answer.

Your loving,
HANKA

718 April 22 [1915]

INFLUENTIAL [WIELMOŻNY] SIR: Wishing to satisfy your desire, I hasten to express my feelings. . . . .

but my thoughts are always directed to the place where you are, my W. But what could I write upon a card? Moreover, my sister-in-law could not live without my giving her to read what I write to anybody. Therefore I did not write a letter to you, for as soon as I began to write she read it. Well, what could I do? I did not want to offend her, but I don't want them to know either what I write to anybody, for then she would laugh at me and remind me always of what I wrote.

As to nice boys whom you mentioned, they were numberless! *Nice* boys flirted with *nice* girls, while I behaved as usual. I must boast that if you come you won't know me, I have grown so very serious. I was left behind all the others. I even avoided the honor of being the older [first] "best girl," but was the younger [second] one. I did not want to have a "best man" [accompanying me], but to be only a guest. Well, I succeeded in the house, but not in the church, for one of these "nice" boys came to me and said that the whole wedding group would not allow me, dressed in wedding-clothes, not to belong to them. So I had him as a "best man." This man is the second engineer, a friend of Stacha's husband. But I did not amuse myself much, although it only depended upon myself. Whenever I could I ran home for awhile, and on the second night I slept, while everybody danced till 7 o'clock in the morning. It was no novelty for me; have I been at few weddings? So it was enough for me to have been there [for a relatively short time], because now no parties amuse me any more, they only annoy me.

I will tell you about your photographs also. I asked Stacha to give them to me, but she said that she wouldn't give them up at all, and she did not. She keeps them hidden. And I will write you this also, that Stacha's husband, ten days after the wedding, went to [military] drill for 6 weeks [as a reservist], and she went to him once, for it was not far away, in Pulawy. She stayed there for 3 days in a hotel. She did not want to go, but the old people [parents] drove her out.[1]

I remain, your truly loving,

HANKA

[1] Hanka has apparently throughout no reservations and no subtlety of calculation. Otherwise she would have recognized that this information would turn Walek's head again toward Stasia.

As to Miss Stanisława, I did not know her until she came on vacation to Miss Anna. She was then 15 years old, she had a higher instruction, was of well-to-do parents, so I did not court her much, for I feared I might be mistaken. When after going back to her parents she wrote a letter to me first, I reciprocated, and later I came to the conclusion that Miss Stanisława was in love with me. Then I doubled my affection toward her [probably: "the expressions of my affection"], but she was so naïve in matters of love that she simply obtruded her person upon me; she wanted me absolutely to marry her. And as I had a companion whom I also loved, knowing well that he had a feeling for Miss Anna, I was ready to yield to him and to give my heart to Miss Stanisława. Once I received from her a letter with the question whether I lived still in "celibacy" and what I was thinking, for she feared to remain an old maid. To this question I remained deaf and cold-blooded.

Then, I had her picture and she had not mine, so for some time she urged me to send her my photograph. As I could not dissuade her, I satisfied her wish a few days before her marriage (without knowing it). And when Miss Anna went to Miss Stanisława's wedding and wanted to take my photograph, Miss St. answered her that nothing was yet lost, "for he can still become mine." . . . . Thus our correspondence finished. Now she lives with her husband well enough, but she has me still in her heart, for I received a postcard from her and I know that she has something in her mind. But I remain deaf to it. Certainly you will agree that she was too naïve. She sacrificed more time to reflecting about love than to widening the experience of her life!

You want to know, respected sir, my opinion, how America influences the Polish girls. You may be sure, not positively, but a hundred times negatively. I have observed it and I observe it still enough to get acquainted with the life of the Polish girls in America, but I have not yet had the luck to meet in America a girl who would be even an imitation of those girls whom I knew in the old country, because few intelligent girls come from Europe, and even if they happen to come they find at once companions who impart to them information which will have a very bad influence on their future, and they soon become tools of demoralization, and so on. And I assure you that I won't marry any girl in America, for it is difficult, very difficult, to find an ideal girl. Every girl upon whom I look has an

Miss Anna [Hanka] was an ideal girl. She loved me madly, but she was not left without reciprocity on my part. I loved her with my whole heart. She was for me a balm, healing the wounds of my heart. In a word, she was everything to me.

Miss Anna had an unbowed character. She surmounted everything, she knew how to provide against everything, and therefore I loved her. She was given up to me with her whole heart and soul, but during all this time I never provoked a blush upon her pretty face, I never tried to do it.

As to proposing, you know that it is a big question! Without having a position suitable to give one's wife a more or less good support it would be useless to propose. And in spite of all, I have parents far advanced in years, and I must endeavor to help them in their old age and to assure existence for myself. I am not so many years old, and she was also young, so we could come to an understanding, for she felt instinctively that I loved her, that I would not leave her, and everything would come in right time!

And now I must mention that I have a companion with whom I lived in one and the same idea and one aspiration. He had also Miss Anna in his eye, but as he came from a richer family and had a higher instruction than I, she had in mind that it would not be an equal love, and she kept far from him. Her maxim was to have a husband of her own social position. . . . . And I . . . . have temperance and limited myself always to words, personally or in correspondence, for I knew and I know that whatever was for me was not for anybody else. I was always sure of myself.

But, alas! The beginning is gay, but the end is sad. For on February 13, 1914, my dearest being bade farewell to this world and evidently to me also. The news about the death of Miss Anna made upon me the impression of a thunderstroke. I lost everything, nothing is left for me. I am now *alone.*

You can see also from these letters which I send you now how my companions write to me, how they express themselves about Miss Anna and how they regret her, how they persuade me not to grieve. But all this is because of that "tomorrow" [probable meaning: "because I left the country under the influence of social ideals"]. I felt particularly bound by the lack of [liberty of] "word," I aspired for a "free" word, and therefore I left my native country. But I felt deeply this American loneliness.

spattered. During the holidays I shall be at home, and afterward I shall go to Warsaw and stay there during the winter in an automobile garage, and sometime in the spring I hope to get a place somewhere and to drive alone [probably as a cab-driver]. If you write [advise] me so, as soon as I come to Warsaw I will try to take lessons somewhere in German, or I will learn alone. . . . . You ask what is the news in Rytwiany. Well, nothing except that many people have left for America since you went. . . . . The turbine upon the dam is already working. In the place of that machine at which you were there is an electric motor, and in general motors are put in instead of all the machines. . . . . But how silly, I am! Why do I talk about the turbine? What do you care there about any turbine? Well, but listen. Going once by this electric machine I forgot entirely that I should not meet you there, and only when I saw Nowak and some other boy there with him, I remembered. . . . . I ask you also whether you receive any correspondence from Rytwiany? Ah, yes, from Miss G. [Hanka], don't you? . . . .

Well, what more? I have nothing to write you at this moment, only I send you greetings from my parents, my sister, and my brother-in-law.

Your loving and sincerely well-wishing friend,

ZYGMUNT

720 February 10, 1913

DEAR WALENTY: Having now nothing to do because of bad roads, I sit at home. I am in good health and I wish to you the same. Everything is all right with me, only I am a little offended with your reproaches. If I felt guilty I would admit it, but since I don't feel guilty of anything like this it is very painful to me. I received 3 letters and 3 cards from you, and I sent you also 3 letters and one card, and in none I made any such reproaches as you did. Is it my fault that you must write first a letter to me, and a few days later, writing another letter, you make reproaches already for my not writing to you, while your first letter to me was still on the way? Only when, after more than 20 days, I received your first letter, i.e., the one which you wrote on November 25, I sent you an answer which you received in the beginning of January. So during this time you wrote [as you say] these 6 letters and 7 cards, each full of reproaches about my not writing, as if I got these letters in a week's time. And now in this

idiotic, not at all a logical, attitude [*sic*]! I have not met in America a single girl to be compared with those in the old country. I feel [the lack of] the pleasant life in the old country as compared with America, but I hope that this pleasant life will come back. Perhaps I shall merit that friends will surround me, as formerly. I hope that in the old country I shall still find a companion by the side of whom I shall lead a more pleasant life than now. I have been already long enough in America, but I cannot find, even for a few minutes, the pleasure of social conversation or flirtation. I don't know how it is in Chicago, Detroit, or other cities, but I think that there is no difference, for I can conclude from papers and understand. Here I finish, although I could write much, very much, more, but I fear importuning you too much. If you wish something more, all right. I won't remain deaf or lazy. I would ask you to correspond with me from time to time, for it would be a great pleasure for me, if it is not too difficult for you and if it does not occupy too much of your time. I receive correspondence from the old country, written on various subjects. I will be able therefore to inform you, as far as you wish.

I had some other letters, very important ones, kept hidden, but one of the boarders stole them. Why? What for? I don't understand what they mattered for him. I have still over 100 letters, but they have very little content which could interest you, so I do not send them. I have a girl in the old country with whom I only began to correspond, but now the post functions so lazily that I don't even wish to write! . . . .

WALENTY PIOTROWSKI

719 SICHOW, December 22, 1912

DEAR WALENTY: . . . . I received your letter, but it is rather late, so that . . . . you won't receive my answer until after the holidays. But since I write it before the holidays, I wish you first a Merry Christmas, a gay and pleasant amusement in an agreeable company, then health and every good, light work, big pay, and at last a big capital and a pretty American girl. You asked me to write you how I succeed. Well, I succeed pretty well. I was already a few times in Warsaw [as chauffeur-assistant]. Only, you know, one becomes so muddy and sometimes so cold. When we come to Warsaw, particularly if there is rain and mud, people look at us as at fools, for we are hardly to be seen from behind the mud, our automobile is so

722 RYTWIANY, January 28, 1913

DEAR WALENTY: Having learned about your present situation, I am very pained . . . . and still more because knowing it I cannot help my dear companion, for I have yet no steady work. I think that besides myself nobody yet knows about your situation, although people know here that you have no work.

So, dear companion, for you, who think more broadly and who are in insecurity about tomorrow, may this present situation be for you an experience for the future. May it be a lesson for you that our mortal enemy is capitalism. May it be at the same time the end of such a life, full of misfortune, wandering, and misery. Yes, dear companion, such is the life of us workers. But our duty is not to let our hands drop impotently, but to make the strongest resistance. So, dear companion, accept these few words of sympathy, as from your true companion. . . . .

ZYGMUNT

723 WARSAW, March 15, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: Let it be so, for I am sure that if I had with anybody else such relations as with you he certainly would not let me call him "companion."[1] And now, dear companion, I want to answer more or less the series of your letters, containing mostly one subject, to which I have never yet answered you according to each letter in particular. So, dear companion, don't be angry with the truest of your friends and don't give too much importance to what I will write you here. You will be convinced that I am sincere. First, dear companion, you do harm to yourself by this your—how shall I call it —this absent-minded behavior. For in writing a letter you are made nervous and distracted by my half-sympathetic, half-cold letters. You think probably: "I love you, I long for you and write it to you so often, while you put me off in any way with evasive letters. It is true that I have your word, which I drew from you once near the machine during pleasant talks, but a long bit of time has flown since then and I want to know with certainty, I want you to love me surely." Don't you think so? Well, and I, when I received your first letter—I confess that it was sincerely awaited—after reading it I felt such a sympathy that if I could I would have flown to you with an aeroplane.

[1] This refers probably to the fact that Walenty is older and was his superior in work.

fourth letter you write that you have sent already 6 letters. I received only 4 and 3 cards, and I have sent you also 4 letters and 1 card, but whether these letters follow one another every week or not, I don't count. I know only that I answer every one of your letters. So why do you fly out, why are you angry and suspect me about things of which I don't feel guilty? . . . .

Your companion,

ZYGMUNT

721 January 22, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: [Letters received and written.] I am in good health and I wish you the same with my whole heart. Now, having no other occupation, we drive beets from Łubnice to Rytwiany with that big automobile . . . . day and night. In our factory there was a wedding and in Rytwiany also; people amuse themselves, profiting from the short carnival.

I want to answer more or less your letter. Well, being working people, oppressed with exploitation in their fatherland, harassed in their native village by the uncertainty of tomorrow, and hearing about this gold-flowing America of their dreams, sure of an improvement of their existence, they go there. But what befalls them? The same, even a still harder labor, sometimes complete lack of work, and then again appears this specter of uncertainty of tomorrow, harassing the man. And such people, being in such a condition, commit often unheard-of things; some of them poison and kill themselves in different ways, others attack and rob merchants and other rich people, and most often they commit robbery and murder upon their own working companions. Such people have still an ineffaceable animality in themselves. But we young men, we ought not to look with cold blood upon the wasting of our bloody labor by these exploiters. Don't think that we alone, the Poles, work hard and are exploited. How many working people are there of English, or German, or of other nationalities! They all have their capitalists, their squanderers, and all this working people constitutes a single invincible power. Only now this working people begins to know this power which it possesses, and by the means of trade-unions it provides itself with capital, in order to be able to begin a struggle with the exploitation. . . . .

Your, always the same, loving companion,

Z.

724 March 17, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: I ask you whether you received my letter of March 15. This letter is very important, although not finished yet, so if you receive it inform me at once, and I will send you the continuation of this letter, and if you don't receive it try to get it, for it won't be withheld at the post, as it is well addressed and has a stamp. You won't receive any news from me until you inform me that you received the letter of March 15. They wrote me from home that you have sent me a view of a drowning ship [evidently symbolic], but they did not send it to me, they sent me only 2 of your letters and a card. Remember about this letter, for it is very important. I compose already the continuation.

ZYGMUNT

725 RYTWIANY, April 21, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: . . . . I will write you about one question which is worth being considered by you. Don't hinder your brother from going to America, for in this way you will be the cause of his bad future. You have no idea how many people went to America and are going still. If you don't take him, he will remain almost alone in Rytwiany, for all his companions will leave soon. You ought to take him, if it were only for this reason, that so many people go to America this spring and everybody gets work, even not bad work, so he would not perish either. I don't know whether it is true, whether you know really all the cities and even all the localities of North America or you only write so. Please don't be angry, but it is only my conclusion from the letters which you write me, criticizing America in every regard.[1] You ask me whether Stach [a common friend who is in America] is working or not. My word! I am really ashamed of you both; being so near to one another, in comparison with the distance which separates me from you, you want me to inform you about each other! Really, something extraordinary must have happened between you, since you are so angry that you do not even write to each other.[2] . . . . And now I inform you that Miss G. [Hanka], according to your wish, saw me, but I don't understand what for. . . . .[3] I resent your

[1] Another example of the difference between the impressionable, sentimental, and unreflective character of Walenty and the more intellectual and equilibrated nature of Zygmunt.

[2] Probably some petty quarrel, easily leading to the breaking of relations with natures such as Walenty's.

[3] Apparently connected with Hanka's conscientious effort to report to Walenty the opinions current about him.

But alas! I am a poor man who knows nothing, so I hastened at least to comfort you by written words. Meanwhile a second letter comes, then a card, then a third letter, then two more cards, and all these on one subject: "You don't write, and I love you." I give you my word that at last I was even angry, for when I sent you the answer after receiving your first letter, before this first letter reached you I had already 3 letters and some cards, all of them full of reproaches about my not writing. Who will not agree with me that even enchanted lovers would be angry? So you see what results from too frequent writing. And now let us come back to this loving. I tell you sincerely, when I read that letter in which you wrote that you would put all the crowns of the world at my feet, I threw the letter away and did not read further. I thought: "How is it possible to write anything like this?" But after reading all that letter and reflecting, I forgive you, for I let myself often be transported also by feeling, but mostly I prevail over such feelings. So you see, dear companion, after this sharp letter, and you understand it very well; you know even already my idea, for I want you to know it; by the power of my will I want you to understand my idea.[1] And precisely by it you see that I am various [in variable moods?] and why I am various I will describe to you in another letter which I will send you within a short time after this one. So, dear companion, let it be the first letter of our real, progressive correspondence, for this past correspondence was some strain which must have broken in a short time. I finish this letter, for I have no place to write more, but even so you will have much to think over, although it is so short.

Your (*variously*)[2] loving and true companion and friend,

ZYGMUNT

[1] The sense is clear. Zygmunt understands the background of the other's "love-letters" and wants him to understand that those feelings should be suppressed. He confesses having had them himself in a slight degree. All this, nevertheless, should not be taken too radically; most certainly there has never been an actual homosexual relation, and Zygmunt does not allude to the possibility of such a relation, but merely to the *type of feelings* of the other man. Probably the reason of his condemning and controlling those feelings is much more their effeminating influence and the weakening of the power of will which they cause and denote than any moral judgment of the homosexual relation to which they may lead and which is probably not even explicitly thought of.

[2] "Variously" here, as well as above, may mean either that his feelings are not yet quite determined, that sometimes he yields to the sentimental friendship, sometimes again feels more manly and intellectual; or that he is ready to be Walenty's friend only in so far as the sentimental affection is excluded. As he never wrote the promised explanatory letter, we do not know which interpretation is the true one.

which happened during my stay in Rytwiany. So you see, dear companion, what this feverish correspondence can lead to. You always suspect me of such stupid things, about which you ought not even to write me, and you always write one and the same, as if it were my duty to listen to it and to answer you correspondingly. If you feel the need of unbosoming your ailments before someone first reflect whether it is possible [suitable] to unbosom them before anybody. But I see that you don't reflect at all about anything, but if something does not please you, then in your opinion it is bad, but only in your opinion, you may be sure. But in answer to these complaints I advise you to get acquainted as well as you can with the actual problems and institutions, and in general to read scientific works. Advice like this has been given to me, and I give it to you.

Now I am in Warsaw and I work in a garage. I earn 50 copecks a day, and the Prince gives me lodging. . . . . And if you analyze the whole thing you won't wonder if I tell you that in the beginning of my work I had an impression under the influence of which I did not want to live upon the world. But it was only the first moment, and after considering the matter everything got changed and everything goes on well enough, only I have a very long distance to go to the work. . . . . I don't know whether you received the postcard in which I asked you to try to get some work for me in America. But I beg your pardon now, for I must still remain for some time in Warsaw. Write me whether you will take your brother to America or not. You have sent your photographs home and to Miss G. [Hanka], while I asked you and you don't send any.

Your loving [companion],

ZYGMUNT

728 June 1, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: I received a letter from you sent to Rytwiany, so I answer you at least on a simple postcard, for not long ago I sent you a letter. As to this that you write, that American life is not agreeable to you, it is to be seen even on your photograph that you lie, for you look even better than you did in our country. Finally, why should we complain to one another about our troubles? We are young, so we ought to try to get on the best possible, for what will be later, when we grow older if we complain now when we are young? You write me that I may know how you are living. But if I write

absence in different respects, particularly now in one, i.e., that I am loafing awfully after girls. If you were here you would certainly dissuade me from it.[1] You ask me to send you my photograph. What can I do, if I have no money to have myself photographed? This is one [reason], and the second is that I have more important things to buy [books?] than to spend money on photographs. Excuse me for expressing myself in so hard a way, but man is often obliged to accept even the most painful things.[2] Your brother told me that you intended to send him photographs. Be so kind and put in one for me. And he told me that you have sent already $50, i.e., 100 roubles. This made me reflect, and I was pained, for you write such monotonous letters and never even mention what you do, what work you have, how much you earn. You omit the things which are the most important at the present time.

Always the same, your loving companion,

ZYGMUNT

But there are moments when he is different.

726 May 14, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: Since Easter I have had no news from you.[3] I waited for a long time for an answer to my last letter from Warsaw, written rather at length. Evidently it did not reach you. For two weeks already I have waited for your wishes [for my name-day]. But you could not guess what news I will give you. Well, you see, I intend to go to America, evidently not immediately, but after some time, when I get more exact information with regard to this. During this time could you try to get for me, if possible, work in some automobile factory?

ZYGMUNT

727 Warsaw, May 29, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: I beg your pardon very much for not having informed you about anything. It was because of different reasons

[1] The homosexual background of the friendship is evidently strong in Walenty, but this passage probably means no more than that the sentimental friendship of the two men would exclude other sentimental relations.

[2] Knowing the importance of the photograph in the psychology of the peasant and the working man, this is an indication of the degree to which Zygmunt is emancipated from the traditions of his class.

[3] The effect of letter 723, which evidently offended Walenty.

know already, when we were still in Rytwiany we all three wrote, I, Stach, and Henryk, to Uncle Wincenty. You know him probably from our talk—the same who learned in Belgium and who is forbidden to come back to Russia. So we wrote to him asking him to help us, by correspondence, in self-education. He had a job and probably no time, but he sent us the address of a lady, his good friend and companion from old times, who is now a private teacher. The lady showed a great readiness to give us advice and information; she even sent us to Rytwiany a few very good books. But although I knew her by letters for more than half a year, I never had any occasion to see her; when I was in Warsaw, she was abroad. Now she is also abroad occupying the place of a teacher. Not long ago she made me acquainted by letter with one of her friends here in Warsaw. It is a young man of 20, son of an official; his father is no longer alive, only the mother is left and receives the pension. This young man has two younger brothers, they are all studying, and he, although so young, has finished 8 classes already [a gymnasium]. But I got acquainted with him before he went away for the summer to the country, and now we only correspond with each other. After so short an acquaintance we are already "companions." And if you are curious in what way we became companions, write to Stach and let him send you a letter—the first which I got from this companion—in which he expresses himself for the first time as my companion, and at the same time informs me about different questions.[1] I had no time to describe to Stasiek my acquaintance with this companion and sent him that letter, but I don't know whether he received it or not, for I send him letters without stamps, in the same way as to you. So, as you see, I have relations with good men. For think of it, how should such a highly educated man enter into relations with such a dirty and moreover ignorant boy as I am? And nevertheless he, being such a man and coming from a higher family, was not ashamed, but came to the shop and in getting acquainted with me shook my dirty hand. So it is possible to conclude that there are still good men in the world, since such a man became more generous through his studies. For usually men now get instruction for business, in order to exploit the ignorant ones, which is ignoble. . . . .

[1] The importance attached to these apparently trifling facts—the use of the term "companion," and the condescension of the student in shaking hands—by a young man of Zygmunt's solid character shows how profound is the difference between even the middle class and the workman class.

you how I am living you will surely say that you are better off in America than I am in Warsaw. Certainly, I earn enough to live [to board], I have a place to lodge. Well, but I need clothes, and I won't give myself totally up to this work alone; I want to study, and nobody will give me books gratis. I won't sit [at home?] like a man who knows neither how to write nor how to read. Well, and then I must change my heart into a stone and write: "Dear parents, send me money," while I know that it is my duty and it is time for me to help my parents, instead. . . . . So don't be angry, dear companion, if I teased you sometimes, for you know what it means to be forced against one's [will]. Let us then stop mutual complaints, for it does not suit us. Instead of writing bad things only, rather let us inform one another about good ones. Describe to me this theater in which you played a part. . . . .

ZYGMUNT

729 August 8, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: I beg your pardon very much for having offended you during these last times in writing you nothing, but excuse me, for I don't depend yet upon myself, but I must still be subject to these stupid laws and absurd institutions for some time, because I am in training. I should wish nobody to be in training in such conditions as I find myself at present. It would need much writing if I wished to describe all this, while I, my dear Walek, have as little time as you can ever imagine. Some day when we meet we shall relate to each other the impressions and troubles experienced during this time. And now we ought not to let our hands fall impotently, commending ourselves to destiny, we ought not to lose hope, and we ought to keep a strong will, for if we lose all this and doubt everything, then it will be still worse. We must think that we are not alone in bad conditions. How many people suffer a hundred times worse than we do, and nevertheless there are many among them who defend themselves with energy against this bad lot. Should we, young men, ever doubt about carrying out our plans? No, we have never doubted and won't doubt that youth is strength, the more so if it is organized and unified; then it is a power which yields before nothing.

And now, dear companion, I shall at last describe to you my conditions, how I spend my time and what company I have. As you

731 September 18, 1913

Dear Companion Walek: I beg your pardon, but I will make a reproach. Why have you written nothing for so long a time? Are you embittered against me, or do you want to vex me in this way, or perhaps to gratify me? Oh, don't ever think that you will gratify me in such a way; be sure that slowly we should get accustomed to it and at last we should forget each other. So, dear Walek, I beg your pardon, for I am conscious that sometimes I forget you, but I forget you only to remember you again, to remember those times of our acquaintance and of our friendship then so strongly linked. But these times passed, opening before us the road of our life, wide but full of thorns. But are we to let our hands drop impotently and commit ourselves to the will of fortune? No! We are young, we have great strength and energy, therefore we ought to go forward boldly and perseveringly, pulling the thorns aside from our road. Yes, dear companion, a hard fate threw us away from our native country, so far, leaving us a remembrance pleasant and dear to our heart. But if we want to understand all this and to give ourselves an account of it, we need learning.

My training goes on well enough. If I can only hold out for some time everything will be well. Now I have inscribed myself for the evening courses of a technical school.

Stach wrote to me that everything is not well with him, and nevertheless he does not lose his hope, but looks always confidently at the intended aim. Oh, how unjust fortune is for having thrown us about the world so far from one another! Nevertheless, we shall be able to bear everything.

So, dear companion, let us renounce all these suspicions, all these [complaints about] pains caused by one to another. Have we not pains enough in our struggle about tomorrow? We have even too much of these different contrarieties and misunderstandings, and it would be bad of us if we continued to act so. What wonder if in the present conditions one does not write to another for some time? Instead of it, one writes, after a longer interruption, really sincerely, truly, with effusion, rapidly and longingly.

So—I beg your pardon once more—be cheerful, don't ever lose hope and strong will. You know, I am very curious and I should be glad if you described to me your whole romance with Miss S. [Stacha] G., and how it ended. Or perhaps it is not ended yet. . . . .

You ask me how I spend my moments. If I only had as much of these moments as I need! You can guess that if I had more of them I would write to you more often. . . . . And now excuse me for making a small remonstrance. But don't be angry. You write me that you belong to an amateur theater, but that you don't find in it good company [amusement?] because of some feeling. This reminds me of romantic novels from old times, when men did not know yet how to govern their feelings; but men who are in such conditions as ours ought to govern any feeling, particularly for such a good thing as an amateur theater. All associations, amateur theaters as well, are useful for our end; it is our duty to give them as much good will and energy as we can. You see I receive advice like this from my new companion who does not spare it to me. . . . .

I remain your loving companion,

ZYGMUNT

How about your romance with Miss Stasia or Miss Hanka?

730 August 15, 1913

DEAR WALEK: I cannot take part in the solemnity of our parish-festival. I wish at least to write a few words home on this day of August 15. How painful it is to spend the time far away from our native country, and still more painful on a day which is solemnly celebrated in our native country.[1]

And precisely while writing these few words to my parents I received your card, in which you inform me about the wedding of Miss Stasia. But probably the wedding is already over, for it was to be on August 10. You guess probably that this news made upon me not a small impression. But precisely on that account write me what she could have written you. I am very curious.

You ask me to write you something about Warsaw. I can write you only this, that Warsaw is full of various kinds of revelry and drinking. If a woman's body can be bought, well, then you can get everything for roubles. But besides all this Warsaw has also good men and good things, as, for example, this companion . . . . about whom I wrote you already. . . . .

Your loving companion,

Zygmunt

[1] This paragraph discloses Zygmunt's attitude toward religion, as stated in the introduction. A socialist like S. Jasiński (cf. that series) would certainly profit from the occasion of this parish-festival to write a declamatory invective against the stupidity of the people—the priests keeping them in "darkness" etc.

As to myself, besides the usual work, all the evenings of the week are occupied with study, so I have often not even time enough to satisfy the indispensable needs. Forgive me, therefore, if I don't answer your letters at once. Do you know, dear companion, how attractive science is, how great, how much it forces us to think about ourselves? Great things, simply miracles, can be seen in science, things which in the future will be of ordinary use to men. But evidently it must be first more or less known.

As to my environment and society, I have a good, intelligent, and instructed society, which I imitate and benefit much from, for I receive from those generous men scientific help. But bad environment is not lacking either; I find myself in it during whole days. . . . .

[Your] l[oving] c[companion],

ZYGMUNT

733 December 7, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: [Excuses himself for not writing.] You will wonder probably why I complain so continually about lack of time. I must inform you at least partly about all this. You know already that we have a [maternal] uncle who finished the university while he was a simple locksmith. He read many books, knew intelligent men, he benefited much, understood the necessity of learning, and decided to go on in this direction. Really he undertook great labors, but with the help of very generous and instructed men he attained his aim. And now, as a licensed engineer, he advises me and wishes me, since I want to learn, not to wear myself out working for my bread and at the same time learning of evenings, as I do now. He was able to finish the university although he began to learn when he was already about 30 years old, and only with the help of strangers who lent him money for living and instruction and to whom he now pays back, in parts, the debt contracted. And I am still so young, and I don't need the help of strangers, since I have so rich a [paternal] uncle. So why should I weary myself so, while I could go to some technical school and after finishing it be an instructed and intelligent proletarian? I should really not even be a proletarian any longer, but being from proletarian extraction, I would not be ashamed even then of proletarians. But you see, my uncle refused me this. I am even ashamed to confess that I have such an uncle. Although we know how much he has he was able to say that he had only enough to give

I send greetings for all our acquaintances from Rytwiany, our native nest, but still dark enough. The function of spreading our enlightenment in our native nest belongs to us, as to its sons, who look upon the wider world. . . . . I send you a hearty handshake.

Your loving companion,

ZYGMUNT

732 October 27, 1913

DEAR COMPANION: I received your letter in which you express [relate] to me your secret. I was very grieved, dear companion, and I sympathize with you. Forgive me, please, if I recall something from the past. Do you remember at one of our meetings upon the dam I said to you something in this sense about your romance, which had only begun then, while you assured me that nothing like this would happen—that I should not even think of it? And still my guesses were just, though I never guessed that anything might happen like this which has happened now. I did not guess it, for I counted more upon her. Who could indeed have suspected anything like this from such a serious young person? But, dear companion, I confess that I don't wonder. Knowing already life more or less and human relations, it does not seem to me strange at all. But in any case notice how weak in spirit are these women. Only consider it well and you will see that any of them is as weak as any other. Oh, excuse me, dear companion, but I express myself like some conservative critic of *love*, of these youthful impulses, of this beauty of youth. But, on the contrary, I am a partisan of it. How beautiful, how simple it is! Should I be a persecutor of love? Oh, no, I am not this! And do you know, dear companion, that when I received that letter from you I had such a wish to write her a letter that would give her back the past assurance which now has fled away, a letter which would render her more firm, more strong in love, a letter which would incite her to confront the greatest impediments and dangers in order to reach the point where the heart beats warmer.[1] But after considering it reasonably I could not do it. And you consider it also reasonably and act as you think the best.

[1] The whole paragraph refers to the marriage of Stasia. We may be sure that Walenty in appealing to Zygmunt for sympathy did not represent the incident frankly. To him, indeed, any preference of another man would seem in Stasia infamous.

time about the factory, talking a little about old times. When I asked him whether he was corresponding with you, he answered that he had not corresponded for a long time. I did not ask him why. . . . . He then told me only that Miss G. had been very sick, but was already better. But I learned afterward that he called on Miss G. during the whole time of her sickness, and before her death, i.e., a few days after our meeting, was there very often. I have been told that she, feeling very feeble, asked him to go away. Then he began to cry, so that later they both cried about themselves [or "about each other?"]. Really a very painful rôle was played if he was really in love with her.

Well, but enough of these sad things. Now I will write you something about myself. First, I go to courses in the school, and for 3 subjects to my acquaintances who are absolutely good to me. I have one course in the school about machinery, another under the title "How to Keep Health during Work," i.e., in general a course in hygiene. It is very curious and interesting. Besides this I receive from my acquaintances very scientific books and papers containing many things of which I knew nothing. Only now I begin to take a wider look about the world. If we met somewhere I should have much to tell you. It is difficult to write all this. So I only advise you with my whole heart, don't waste your time, but try to read social things, for in reading about any science you will be able to explain to yourself many, many contradictions of life. . . . .[1]

ZYGMUNT

735 April 7, 1914

DEAR COMPANION: After so long a silence at last I bring it about to write a letter. . . . . It could seem as if the subject of our

[1] This and the following letters, except for the reference to Hanka, do not contribute any new incidents but show the progressive development of Zygmunt's self-consciousness and social idealism, and thus help to understand the type of man. This type is and was very frequent in Poland in association with the development of national and socialistic ideas. Up to the last quarter of the nineteenth century it was limited almost exclusively to the intelligent classes, and the social idealism assumed mainly the form of nationalism. Since 1870–80 the type has become frequent among workmen, in connection with socialism. Since about 1890 it has become more and more frequent among peasants and assumes the forms found in the newspapers *Gazeta Swiąteczna* and *Zaranie* (cf. Vol. IV). But, as our collection shows, it is both less frequent and less thoroughly developed among peasants, probably because of the stronger economic and traditional determinism. This type and the corresponding type among women will be more systematically treated in Vol. IV.

instruction to his son and to live in his old days. And I did not want any gift from him; I wanted only as much as I need for studying and for living during my studies. After finishing the studies I would have paid back the debt either to himself or to his son. And would it not have been very profitable for me and a noble act of citizenship from him? I am very pained, not so much because he does not want to help me as because he does not understand it; he is still so dark and backward. Therefore I must weary on now in this way. The studies take my time until 12 or 1 o'clock in the night and in the morning I must rise at 6:30, for although my work begins at 8, I have so far to go that I must rise sooner.

Well, enough of these complaints and these contrarieties of which our life is composed. . . . . The Christmas holidays are not far away, holidays which awaken in all of us children, far away from their families, dear remembrances of the past years, of the moments spent in the family circle. But things are now taking such a turn in the world that not all children can spend the holidays in their native homes. I am very pained to think that you and Stach belong to these. And so on the approach of the holidays I wish you to spend them merrily, and also I wish you that thought which comforts you when you remember that you are so far away from your home. Excuse me for expressing my wishes upon ordinary paper, but be sure that they are warmer and more sincere than others, written upon showy material. . . . .

Your loving companion,

ZYGMUNT

734 March 5, 1914

DEAR COMPANION: . . . . I am now in Warsaw, I am working as before, only in another shop. The conditions are somewhat better and the work much nearer. . . . .

I think you know already that Miss G. [Hanka] is dead. I was leaving for Warsaw on the very day of her funeral. It was very painful for me not to be at the funeral, but nothing can be done; duties and conditions oblige a man to act. . . . . I regret Miss Anna very, very much, for she was one of the good, model girls. Well, but nothing can be done, we must persuade ourselves of it in some way. And now I will mention to you something about Kalina. As I wrote you, we met once accidentally at Rytwiany. We walked for a long

736 May 4, 1914

DEAR COMPANION: I inform you that I received two of your letters which I answer only now, for they were at a short interval. . . . . In the first you write me about your trouble, your loneliness, and every letter is full of some sorrow, some doubt in your force and your intentions. Is it not time to leave this sorrow? It is of no benefit to us at all, but on the contrary, we lose much through it. I repeat, dear companion, we lose much through it, for even if our tendency were realizable it would never come to an effect through our doubts of its realization. In the same way, you remember perhaps, when Moses led the Israelites and, wanting to do a miracle before the Israelites, struck three times a rock from which water gushed out. Why did he need to strike three times, since the water could have gushed out the first time? If you have learned it you remember probably that Moses doubted the first and the second time that the water could gush on his order. This comparison will appear strange to you, for Moses was an envoy of God to liberate the people from slavery (I suppose you will think so). I don't deny it, but does slavery not exist now? Still worse, for there exists a spiritual slavery of whole masses of people, and thus a man conscious of this slavery has to wait for this mission. The main cause of our sorrow is that we always think and complain about our own distress. But if we saw not only our distress but also that of other people and if we tried to help them, we should forget absolutely our own. In that case we should say that we think socially. O dear companion, it is very beautiful and lofty to think socially. The people who think socially and give themselves up to social problems, forgetting about their own, reach great things. I should like very much, dear companion, to make you understand as well as possible, so that you might think differently and not grieve, but one is not always able to express what he wishes. . . . .

ZYGMUNT

737 RYTWIANY, February 14, 1913

DEAR WALEK: . . . . I thank you for not forgetting me. . . . . I beg you, dear W., be so kind and write me a letter and describe the news there in America . . . . and whether it seems to you better than in Rytwiany, for I am tired of staying in Rytwiany. . . . . I work in the same shop, but it is very boresome, for you know that old beggar [his superior], how he is; so there is not a single quiet day. I

correspondence were exhausted, as if our correspondence were declining. It happens thus with most friends who after separating for some time, get accustomed to it and finally forget about each other, about the friendship which united them formerly. But this happens only between friends who are not conscious of themselves, who gave themselves too much up to fate and fate precisely tears the bonds of their friendship. But you, dear companion, don't suppose that this should ever happen between us. You see, I was silent because just now is the time of my great effort to understand, i.e., I am reflecting about all the phenomena which are found in the course of the day and which interest me very much. Up to the present I am able to explain many things to myself, to judge many things and to appreciate those which are good.

I am only pained that whenever I receive a letter from you it is always full of some sadness, always full of a great longing. It is therefore not strange if every such letter influences me painfully. So it is my duty to provide against it, realizing that I am your friend but one whom fortune set upon a different way.

Well, dear Walek, give an account to yourself, of what circumstances obliged you to emigrate. Did you go of your own wish or were you really forced to it? Then reflect well what was the difference between your home and your new system of life, and if you suffered because of it was it not possible to remedy it, and in what way. You see, you can draw a lesson from your own life. Meanwhile you grieve and complain so endlessly that even a man burdened with a wife and children would complain less. I know, my dear, that you are pained by the actual relations between men and by all this arrangement. But you can persuade yourself that it is a powerful strain due to the development of everything, and without this development nothing could be done. Capitalism develops, immorality and degeneration develop also, but at the same time science develops on a great scale, a great self-consciousness develops among workmen, and in general everything develops. Should we stand with broken hands and grieve? It would be absolutely unsuitable. It is time to shake off these old prejudices. Why, you are young, and true youth is not subject to these prepossessions. . . . . If you can, read some day Mickiewicz's "Ode to Youth" and reflect well about it, for it serves as a watchword for the young people of lower and higher schools in Warsaw. . . . .

ZYGMUNT

738 March 15, 1914

DEAR COMPANION WALEK: I beg your pardon for not having answered. . . . . There is no news in Rytwiany . . . . only I inform you, though probably you know it already, that Miss G. [Hanka] is dead. I was at the funeral. . . . . I saw Kalina, for he was also there. We talked a little about you, among others. He asked how you are succeeding there in America, for he said he had had no letter from you since you left. . . . . As to Stach [the writer's cousin], he certainly has forgotten about me already, for I don't know what he is doing there and why it is so difficult for him to write. But I am not eager either to write him the first, and positively it won't happen, for I know that now one can sooner profit from a stranger than from one's brother. But I don't care for it at all; let him do what he wants, I won't go to him for anything. [News about work and factory.]

And now, as to the girls, they all sit like hens upon eggs and wait to see how soon the happy moment will appear for them. But it is not so easy. They will sit for some time still. I am still with my Halka as before—sometimes bad, sometimes good, moments, but still nothing is certain in our affair, for we have many impediments. So I behave as I can and as is suitable for me, although, as you know, I am very much in love with her and I should like the things not to pass away so lightly, for now she begins already to confess a little her reciprocation. But her mother does not please me, for she has a mouth rather too big, and therefore she likes sometimes to cause a misunderstanding. If anything results from it you will learn it, for I shall write you everything, but only about May or June. Up to the present I don't know anything, only I guess, but nobody can know somebody else's thoughts. Well, but probably it will end about those months, one way or the other. . . . . And now I inform you also about her sister, that in May will be her wedding with Mr. C. There is yet no certainty, for the divorce-suit is to be ended this month, but he is sure to win, and we shall dance in May.

I have nothing more to write, for you will be even weary with reading this; you will say that these are only trifles, nothing serious. Well, don't believe that I think it; I described all this precisely because I know that you like to read and to know everything.

Your loving c[ompanion],

HENRYK

must bear all this for some time still, and next month . . . . I will ask for an advance. I don't know how I shall succeed, but it seems to me that they will give whatever I ask, for in winter good work opens up, and they have no men. And now you know perhaps that Władek M. got married. . . . . The wedding was first rate, people of higher class alone, few friends, for that Hela of his wanted it so. . . . . The music was the kind we had a better variety of sometimes years ago. Three musicians played, two violins and a drum. I don't write you any more about it, for I don't know; they got married, they embrace, and it goes on well up to the present; what the future will be we don't know. I don't know whether you received the cards which I sent you, two of them. In one I wrote you that I intended to marry during carnival, but it was only because I had nothing to write upon such a small card where there is not even space, and I wrote you this in order that you might have something to laugh at, for I know how you talked to me about my intentions. But up to the present I still remain the same. If I go away I don't know what will happen with us both, for up to the present we love each other madly and when we meet we give a kiss. But now we don't meet often, and I don't go to her home; we meet only upon the street, or when she goes to the church. And all this because many misunderstandings happened with her mother, and my sister does not go there and she says that she probably won't ever go again. . . . .

Now I inform you about the illness of Rog. She was very sick because she wanted to poison in herself a small engineer who is to come into the world. The younger of those two who were in Rytwiany in your times made it. He promised to marry her and did whatever he wished with her. At last, when he could not get rid of her after this, he had to go to Warsaw and calmed himself ["gave no news" or "died"?] and so she was left a widow.

And now I inform you that we both, I and Zygmunt, will receive books from my brother, who was in a school in Belgium. These books are to be instructive in our specialities. So now I think more about studying a little, and later perhaps I will go to him, or if not, then to you to America. We haven't the books yet, but we expect them from day to day, and if I receive them I will begin again to love books and will think about them more than about my girl. But I won't leave her as long as I am in Rytwiany. . . . .

HENRYK

news. . . . . I don't forget either what we talked before separating. Don't think that I am forgetting you. I considered you my first companion when you were in Rytwiany, for as to these companions whom I have now, I don't care much for them, except Miciek. I keep very little company with them. I stay mostly at home, and if not in my own home, then with my girl. But things go on very badly with us; every short time some anger comes. Just tonight, when I am writing this letter to you, there is again some misunderstanding with her. But I don't know how it will be further. Sometimes, when it is all right with us she arouses in me so much love that I should be glad to give my life for her. I don't understand whether she only excites me thus or it is a fact [that she loves me]. But, as it seems to me, she has fallen very much in love with me, for if I go anywhere or talk with any other girl, I don't know what becomes of her and then she gets angry. I won't write any more about her, for I don't know how it will turn out. [Indifferent news.]

And now I beg you, tell me about America in general, everything. How do the workmen stand there, how do our Poles behave in America, what girls are there, whether they are worth something or nothing. . . . . I have heard here that you have there very good [pleasant] society. . . . . And inform me whether it is calm there or they are thinking about some trouble, for there is always something new. . . . .

HENRYK

741 October 26 [1913]

I begin my letter with these godly words "P[raised] b[e] J. Ch."
I sit to the table,
I unfold the paper,
And I write a letter.
I don't write it with pen and ink alone,
But with a sweet heart, a dear diamond.
My pen wrote
My heart wept
For it has not seen you since long ago.

[Generalities about health and success.] We wish you also health and good success from God's Mother of Sulislawice, whom you did not see—how she was crowned. May this God's Mother help you in that America. We received your letter on October 24, for which we thank you heartily. . . . . When I read this letter I wept so that I hardly

739 [April, 1913]

DEAR WALEK: . . . . I received your card and letter. . . . . I inform you now about my success. I work as before. I received an advance on April 1; . . . . I have now 20 roubles instead of 16. . . . . I asked for 25, but they gave me only 20 for the present. . . . . I must still push my misery before me for some time in Rytwiany.

As to you, dear Walek, you tell me that you have already heard there that people here speak badly about you. I am astonished, how you know immediately in America what is going on in our country. I won't write you much, for you would think that I laugh at you, but it is true that I myself heard people saying that you are nowhere satisfied, when you were in Rytwiany you only looked for easy bread, and just so they think that if you are in bad conditions there it is because you don't wish to work. They say that you do nothing there, that you loaf about and think that it will drop from heaven. But excuse me if I dare to write so about you. I won't say any more, for you would be very angry. But don't mind at all what they say about you, for now you can whistle at them and they can do nothing against you there.

As to me . . . . I was a little angry with my betrothed, as you call her. For a month we did not speak, but during the holidays we made apologies and now everything goes on well, as before. But we see each other very seldom, only on holidays, for, as you know already, ... Zygmunt brought books from Warsaw, and now I don't loaf about any more of evenings, but read. I don't go to her house, but when we meet on the street we talk a little, and nothing more. Her older sister is marrying . . . . that German engineer who was here when you were still at home, ... and if I don't leave Rytwiany my wedding will be next spring, and only then I shall live with a wife. But if I leave, then everything will be lost, like a stone in water, for I hope to go to my brother abroad. . . . .

Your loving,

HENRYK

740 April 16, 1914

DEAR COMPANION WALEK: . . . . You say that it is painful for you that I don't write, but I wrote 2 letters, ... so certainly letters don't reach you. In my first letter there was much news, among other things that Miss G. was dead, and in the second various local

742 January 3, 1914

DEAR BROTHER [COUSIN]: [Usual greeting, wishes; letter and photograph received.] I am very glad that you look so beautiful upon the photograph. Everybody wonders much. Please inform me whether you look really so as upon the photograph, or not, for my father takes it always and looks [wondering] that you don't seem like yourself. Only, dearest brother, you look very sad and I was grieved that you were sick. I beg you, dear brother, when do you intend to come to our country? For I should like you to be at my wedding, and if not, then perhaps at my funeral, for this is more probable than the wedding. But I beg you, write me. I long for you, dear brother, for we have not seen one another for very long and I should like to see you alive. Although I see you upon the paper, you don't speak to me. [Weather; holidays; news about friends.] Come, dear brother, to our country, for it is our beloved country, and perhaps you are homesick there and sad, and here you will have whatever you need for eternity. Our priest said that there is not long to wait until the end of the world. You have a father who is old; it would be sad if you were not at his funeral, for your brother is not like you; everybody regrets you, while many complain about him. [Greetings.]

A. P.

743 May 26, 1913

DEAR *Swat*:[1] I speak to you with these words: "P[raised] b[e] J. Ch. and Mary, the Holiest Mother, queen of the Polish crown." [Health, wishes; letter received.] And now I inform you that there is no news with us, everything is as it was, only Rytwiany seems empty and sad. But on the other hand in this beloved month of May we borrow mirth and a soft comfort at the feet of God's Mother of Incessant Help and we live with hope from day to day. Dear *swat*, you did not write whether the May service[2] is performed there, at least on Sundays. And then, you look very sad on the photographs. [News about family.] I have nothing more of interest to write, dear *swat*, for there is nothing; sad and tedious, as usually in Rytwiany.

[1] Literally "matchmaker," "bridesman," *swat* is used here to indicate an indefinite near relation.

[2] A religious service performed in the evening during the whole month of May, in honor of Mary.

could read it, and father and mother also, for [we were touched that] you don't forget us. [News about family and friends.]

I describe to you what a church festival we saw, such as perhaps nobody will live to see any more. Our Lord God allowed you to live at this time, but nothing can be done, since you did not see it. But I was there and I will describe everything to you, as to my dear brother. There were 250 priests, two bishops, and so many people that it was impossible to see over them. They conducted the Holiest Mother, and four orchestras played behind the procession when they brought her to a pavilion beyond Sulislawice. And the pavilion was so beautifully adorned that the heart burst open with regret [emotion]. The priests sang alone and the bishop crowned God's Mother, and the whole people lay crosswise [arms extended] upon the earth. Priests carried this image, and lords and peasants, everybody a little. I am unable to describe to you, dear brother, this miraculous festival.[1] Our vicar was with the company [of pilgrims from the village]. We lead him, in a crown. We have now such a nice [handsome] vicar. Priest Kow. went away. He said a mass for the whole parish and asked us to greet all you who are in America. He wept during the mass, and the people in the church wept so and were so crowded around him that he could hardly leave us.[2]

Remember, dear brother, don't marry in America, for I should like to be at your wedding, for I rejoice about you as about my own brother, and still more. I should be glad if you were at my wedding, but I don't know, for mine will be probably during the carnival. And to your brother girls come themselves—such luck he has among girls. We were at his name-day in his house, but we said to ourselves: "It is not the same as with Waluś." There were guests enough, but he is not the same as you are. . . . .

[A. P.]

[1] This part of the letter is one of the best expressions of religious feelings which we have. Particularly the influence of the ceremonial and that of the crowd, leading almost to ecstasis, is most naïvely manifested. It shows the extent to which the influence of religion in peasant life depends upon aesthetic and social factors.

[2] The personality of the priest plays an important rôle in religious life. We have seen in other series the influence of the personal factor upon the attitude of the peasant toward church and religion; this influence is still more manifest in the letters to the newspapers, for it grows with the modern religious evolution.

the pavilion—the whole train of clergy, princes, nobility, and all. The bishop of Sandomierz celebrated the full service and delivered the sermon in that pavilion, and after the ceremony of crowning the image was taken back to the cloister. We send you a small image [photograph] in the new crown; you will learn better details about this crowning from the papers. And then, dear Walenty, our friend, we inform you that Rytwiany will be scattered, for they are making "colonies" already and they are very much against us, the *komorniks;* they want absolutely to drive us away from these sands and from Rytwiany in general, so we don't know what will happen with us. You say that I have a boy and don't write you anything about it. Well, I know nothing, and I am very curious whence you got the news. As to Marylka, I answer every letter, but she is now occupied with her boy and does not deign to write me. Please congratulate her privately from me about her [future] marriage. . . . .

JULA

746 June 18, 1913

. . . . "Praised be" [etc., usual beginning; health; wishes.]

DEAR SON: We inform you that we received 2 letters, ... for which we thank you heartily, for we learned many curious things from these letters. Dear son, you write us that you have no money. How could you have money, since on the letters alone which you write about the world you spend perhaps 3 or 4 dollars a week. Write to us as often as possible, but don't send letters everywhere about the world. Only think how much money has gone already on these letters. Dear son, you grieved us in writing that you had no money. It is bad, dear son. As it seems, therefore, you won't send your debt back in time, for the end of the year [since you borrowed it] is not far, and you write that you have no money. We are glad that you are in good health and that you earn more now, but this grieves us, that you have no money. For if you put a few dollars aside and instead of keeping them, send them here, you would have more. Having $50, if you send them here, you would have 100 [roubles]. Dear son, you write that your boss likes you. Surely you must treat him with drink very much, and therefore he likes you. Whatever you earn, you pour out [liquor] for this money into him, and therefore he likes you, and therefore you have no money. You tell me not to send you either a pillow or tea. I should have a great pleasure in sending them to you, I should like to gratify you, but what can I do when there

[I have] no beauty, no money, it is difficult to get married, but may thy will, O Lord, be done. . . . .

Describe to us everything in detail after receiving this letter, what is the news, did you marry, and who got married there. [Greetings and wishes.]

JULA

744 July 12, 1913

DEAR WALENTY: [Beginning as in the preceding letter; health, wishes.] Praise be to God for your good success. As to the longing [homesickness] about which you complain, this longing will leave you soon, for people say that wherever is bread and well-being there the man has delight. [Weather; crops.] I am always equally bored in this Rytwiany. I should like also to go to America, but they [the parents] won't permit me. . . . . You promised us to describe exactly the conditions in America, but you don't seem to be in a hurry. You did not deign to write us either in what sort of factory you work and what your work is at present. Excuse me, dear *swat*, for requiring too much, but all this is because if one is not somewhere one would like to do everything. I am very curious why Marylka does not write to me, for I have had no letter from her since long ago. Surely she has a big society. You must also have a large society, and it is very praiseworthy. . . . .

[Greetings from the whole family.] Greet Marylka also from us all, embrace her and kiss her in my name as many times as she will let you. . . . .

JULA

745 September 12, 1913

DEAR FRIEND: [Beginning as before.] We inform you, dear friend, that there is a papal jubilee appointed for a whole month, from August 15 till September 15, and in the diocese of Sandomierz full absolution is granted for being 6 times in a church and confessing. And then, on the solemn day of birth of God's Mother [September 8] a crowning of the image of God's Mother in Sulislawice has been performed. The weather was splendid, and the meeting numerous. There were 3 bishops, 150 priests who took part in the crowning, and 180 companies [of pilgrims] came from all the sides of the world. The crowning of the image was performed in the field, a pavilion was built 1½ versts from the cloister. The image was taken away from the altar, and with great solemnity and ceremony they proceeded to

LIPNIACKI SERIES

Letters from a manor-owner, G. T., to his former employee, Lipniacki, probably a farm-clerk, who must have played some part in the revolution of 1905–6 obliging him to go to America.

This kind of relation between a manor-owner and his servant can arise only if the manor-owner is unmarried. The woman introduces at once the question of class-distinction, which makes such an intimacy impossible and removes the main factor of familiarity—the solitude of country life. In this particular case the intimacy is favored by the fact that the manor-owner is old and sick, does not leave his house, and receives few guests. Perhaps the revolution, in which both are interested—the servant openly, the master secretly—creates a new tie between them.

748–56, FROM A MANOR-OWNER IN POLAND, TO HIS FORMER SERVANT, IN AMERICA, AND TWO LETTERS FROM A FARM-MANAGER TO THE LATTER

748 Rysiów, July 3, 1908

Mr. Jan: I received your last letter from Swansborough, ... and then for some months there has been no news at all, so that we made different suppositions . . . . —that you went to Australia, were sick or even dead. In the winter the blacksmith M. started the rumor that he had met you one evening in the forest. We thought that you had returned secretly and didn't show yourself, wishing to learn first what is the news. Your father came to us, thinking that perhaps you were hidden here. Only at the end of March or in April, Stanisław [the farm-manager] received the works of Sienkiewicz and we guessed that they were from you, for there was not a word, and the wrapping was so torn that only the address, written by a strange hand, remained intact. No wonder, for they tore it first at the frontier, then in the censure through which all the books must pass. We

is nobody through whom [I can send]. Mańka and Stefan S. intend to go, but they prepare themselves for the journey like Jews for a war [proverb: slowly and unwillingly]. And even if I sent it through her she would do the same as Szym. did, for she is a terrible idiot, totally stupid.

Dear brother, you write me to leave my work here. But if I leave this work who will work? Father is old, and he works hard. Everybody tells him: "You ought not to work so hard, you have two sons, one here, the other in America. You ought to sit at home.". . . .

Dear son, don't be openhearted [generous], for openhearted people have empty pockets. You write us, dear son, about your dream, but I don't know what I dream and I don't describe it to you, for it is not to be described. Once already I opened the door [in a dream], for you called through the window, but you did not want to come in. Then I cried till the morning. . . . .

[Your mother],
W. P.

747 November 9, 1913

Dear Son: . . . . You write that the food does not taste good to you. But from this consumption may seize you in a short time, so put some money aside and come back to our country. . . . . You write us that you are in good conditions. What is the goodness if you cannot eat? We inform you, dear son, that from America there came back [enumeration], and that on November 3 at noon 2 houses were burned, Chmiel's and Jastrząb's. On Monday they were burned down, and on Tuesday Chmiel got his son married. . . . . They baked cakes and smoked sausage during the whole night, and probably from this the fire arose.

But if you knew, dear brother, how much groaning and weeping there was! You have no idea. The hair stood upon one's head. The people of whole Piaski knelt and begged for a change, that our Lord God might stop the calamity. But nothing helped, what was to burn was burned, and we saved the other houses, for I am now in the fire-guard. . . . . Three days later a man died who had been frightened by the cries of the wailing people.

Wojtuś wrote that $30 has been stolen from him in America, so be on your guard lest somebody circumvent you. If you have money, hide it; let nobody know about it, not even your companion. . . . .

W. P.

own guilt upon you. . . . . And then, it seems to me that ["Kazio"] in particular has some favors from the authorities, for his affair stuck in some strange way and nothing is to be heard about it, and there are also other things which show that he belongs to the s[pies]. People say so; perhaps it is not true.

In the beginning of July there appeared in Firlej 5 young men two of whom killed a police officer and a constable, ... the third killed the lawyer M., and the last two fired at other constables in the town, but without result. . . . . Some dozens of men have been arrested in Michów and the neighborhood, and all of them have been taken to Warsaw in irons. Probably they won't return any more, at least not soon.

If people say here different absurd things about you it can be explained by two causes. First, your going to America makes them think that you ran away from some punishment, and again, you have quarrelled with many people, so they speak absurdities from anger. There is one man, and of the intelligent class, who says that all these who have served with me [on my estate] became bandits.[1] Whence such an opinion? He has been no more than a year in this country.

In your home there is no news. Your father was here and asked about you. I told him you had written that everything was well with you. Your friend, the locksmith Zdunek, is dead of consumption. You ought also to be careful, for remember that in your family two persons died of consumption. . . . .

I greet you heartily,
G. T.

750 October 17, 1908

Mr. Jan: . . . . I have sent you 60 roubles. There was not so much money got for your clothes, but I sent more, supposing that slowly more will be gathered. . . . . After this card which you wrote about the slaughter in Firlej a new police officer came to us and asked Stanisław who wrote it. Stanisław answered that he did not get any such letter and did not know who wrote it. But the policeman said that they knew that you had written it. What wrong had these men who were killed done to you? Why did you rejoice in their death? So be more careful in the future. You wrote it without thinking, and

[1] During and after the revolution of 1905–6 many plain robbers assumed the rôle of revolutionists and many revolutionists (especially after the execution of their leaders) dropped into banditism. This situation will be treated in Vol. IV.

could not find even the stamp. Only a few weeks ago we received 7 cards from you from Baltimore. . . . .

You write that in October you will go to school. All right, learn, for learning is always useful. But your project to join the army does not seem good to me. First, the time spent in the army is lost. Then, in the United States military service does not pay, they consider the army to be a throng of sluggards and spongers. Finally, in a few years a war between the United States and Japan will surely break out, as a result of commercial rivalry, so you may lay down your head [perish] for a foreign business. [Death of the writer's friend and neighbor.]

In our neighborhood things are more quiet, although in the Kingdom and in Warsaw attacks still happen. Every town is full of constables. In Michów there are 12, in Kamionka 12, in Firlej 8. The suit about Kałużyński is not yet settled. I hear that [the accused] excuse themselves by saying that it was you who made most of the trouble in Firlej.[1] You are searched for by [advertisements in] papers. Near Lublin there are still attacks of bandits. A week ago, during a fair, a dozen farmers were robbed and one killed.

Stanisław has sold a part of your clothes for about 40 roubles, and lent the money at interest. He still has the rest. People say that he asks too much, and don't buy. In your home everything is well. [Describes his sickness.] Now, after 4 months, it is better, but I cannot stand; two men raise me and seat upon a rolling-chair. . . . . My fingers are quite cramped . . . . but I can still hold a pen or a spoon. . . . . But probably all this will end soon. . . . .

G. T.

749 August 13, 1908

Mr. Jan: I received your letter yesterday and I answer you at once. . . . . As to "Kazio," I would not advise you to write about him for two reasons. First, I have no possibility of ascertaining whether it was he or somebody else among this company who talked about you, and what was said about you in general. What I heard comes from different persons who may for some reasons tell untruth, but there is a great probability that [the prisoners], wishing to defend themselves and counting upon it that the government can do nothing against you and that you won't come back to this country, put their

[1] It was usual in political trials to put the blame on any one of the number who succeeded in escaping the authorities.

Górnik has married the widow, almost twice older than himself . . . . and now he loafs about and weeps for marrying her.

The priest Tel. left Rudno and moved to Opole, to a better parish. He began to repair the houses but did not finish it. Another priest came, an old man with a numerous family—with the organist and beadle 18 persons. He does not enjoy a good opinion. The parishioners did not want him and say that they won't give any money for repairing.[1] And one of the houses is almost ruined. The other is without doors, windows, floors, stoves, or ceilings. I don't know how it will end. . . . .

G. T.

752 February 24, 1909

Mr. Jan: I received your letter. . . . . In the post-office there is a parcel for Stanisław and they make trouble about delivering it. Perhaps it is books from you. But why do you spend money in sending gifts? . . . .

The affair of "Kazio" & Co. was judged a month ago by the court-martial in Warsaw. They were all declared not guilty in this affair, but have been sent to Russia for belonging to the socialistic party, except "Kazio," who did not belong to any party. [New robberies; some bandits caught.] It is only strange that all these bandits are caught by the detachment of police sent from Lublin, while the local police . . . . has never yet discovered any of them [because bribed]. . . . .

Stanisław has sold of your clothes to the amount of 54 roubles 68 copecks; there are still left 25 collars, 5 pairs of cuffs, 1 bedsheet, 5 pillowcases, a yellow waistcoat, a summer overcoat, green trousers and vest, 4 neckties, almost all the shirt-buttons, a pair of scissors, a comb, envelopes, photographs of girls [probably actresses], a hat, a box, a valise, a pillow, a lamp, the books, *Secretary* [models of letters], *Sexual Life*, *Atlas of Russia*, *The Honeymoon*, and 5 small booklets.[2] . . . .

I greet you,

G. T.

[1] This paragraph, connected with the corresponding one in No. 750, shows to what an extent the attitude of the peasants toward the priest depends upon the personality of the latter.

[2] The enumeration shows clearly that the man was a coxcomb in his social sphere. This is typical for a farm-clerk, who is generally an unmarried man (when

here they annoy the persons to whom you wrote. The information of the papers about the murderers in Firlej was false. In two houses near Lublin some bandits were killed, some arrested, and among the latter, two confessed that they had killed the constables in Firlej; the revolver of a dead constable was found with them. . . . . Lately there was an attack upon the manor in Krasinin. They stole some money and jewelry and wounded the proprietor with his own gun. The attacks upon governmental liquor-shops and upon inhabitants in their houses, and highway-robberies do not cease. . . . .

Why do you spend money in subscribing to a paper for Stanisław? Probably you have not much money to spend yourself, and Stanisław cannot demand such gifts from you. [Weather; crops and harvest; cholera in Russia; farming news.]

Jaś Górnik [a manor-servant] became stubborn and went away for the second time. Later on he wanted to come back, but I thanked him [refused]. Now he is marrying a widow of 36 and will have at once a boy 6 years old (there were more, but they are dead). But the widow has 600 roubles, people say. Well, may he only not be deceived, and get the money of which he is so greedy. The woman, I hear, is a loafer and in spite of her 36 years runs to musics [dancing parties] and after boys. But he seems not to mind it if only she has money.[1] May he not be deceived like Kozik, who was to get 500 roubles with his wife, got nothing, and now beats his wife for it. [Enumerates his house-servants; news about neighbors.]

The new priest in Rudno, Tel., is very kind, and people like him. They decided to give money for repairing the two houses and building a new one for him. . . . .

I greet you,

G. T.

751 January 11, 1909

Mr. Jan: Being in bed for three months, I have had no possibility of answering you. Now, sitting again in the rolling-chair, I take my pen to thank you for your last long letter in which you describe the farming in America. Well, the customs change from land to land, but evidently the people work better than in our country. [Describes new murders and robberies.]

[1] As a farm-servant, particularly a teamster like this one, has little chance to put enough money aside to buy land, and as land-hunger is a prevalent feature of the true peasant, such a marriage does not prove that the man is avaricious, for the idea of land-property is not a purely economic factor.

[The following, No. 754, is composed of passages selected from letters of various dates.]

754 October 18, 1909

MR. JAN: . . . . I have been in bed again until yesterday, and therefore I did not write to you. . . . . What was the reason of the bluff about your coming back? If you wished to make a joke with other people, never mind; but why did you lead me into error? I was troubled, thinking that after your return you might be arrested. I don't say that you are guilty.[1] But you emigrated to America, and people immediately concluded that you must have taken part in something. And as you did not lack various enemies, who pretended to be your friends as long as you were here but attacked you as soon as you left, you might have been arrested and kept in prison for a few or for many months, until the matter was cleared, for although the state of war is abolished, there is still a state of "strengthened protection," which is almost the same. . . . .

[June 25, 1910]

Although you are already a grown-up man and you have your own reason, don't be angry if I warn you about your matrimonial intentions. Remember that you may easily wander alone, in case of necessity, from place to place, but with a wife and children it is difficult, often quite impossible. And then one does not know what to do with this pawn. It is easy to get married, but it is very difficult, if not impossible, to get unmarried again. . . . .

[February 8, 1911]

Your preceding cards informed us laconically that you traveled, but you did not write what for. It is very agreeable to travel for the pleasure of it, but I know from my own experience that it costs very much. Did your financial position allow you to do it? We are not curious to investigate your mysteries, but if it is not a secret we should be glad to learn where you have been and why. . . . .

Different people ask here sometimes for your address. We answer that we don't know. Shall we give it or not? . . . .

Among the people who are serving with us probably you don't know many now. . . . . Perhaps you remember that small boy Konrad who came to Marysia from Łukowiec. Now he is 18 and is

[1] He evidently was so in political matters, but the writer pretends to be ignorant or writes in this way fearing the letter will be opened by the police.

753 May 2, 1909

MR. JAN: . . . . Stanisław will buy the books for which you asked when he goes to Lublin. But why do you need the book *Bezwyznaniowość* ["Freethinking"; literally, "being without a confession"]. Whoever does not believe does not need the book, and I think it is not you, for since you ask the priest in Firlej for a mass, you must belong to the believers. . . . .

For a month there has been a new judge in Michów, sent by the government, a Russian, Mr. Trabuchow, elder of the Don-Cossacks. He walks dressed like a Cossack, with a sword at his side. He punishes severely. He fined Okoń [a peasant] 20 roubles for having taken a piece of wood from the governmental forest in Lubartów, besides the value of the wood. A peasant said, "Thief" to another. He got a month of prison, etc. But as it is a Russian judge, and moreover a soldier, the peasants sit quiet and say nothing. He called on me and said that he would keep the court in order. He forbids the assistants to go to beerhouses with the parties, he dismisses constables when they don't keep order. In short, he is full of energy. . . . . The peasants now regret the deceased Mr. Zaleski. As long as he lived they did with him whatever they wanted. . . . . Only now they understand what they have lost.

Katarzyna, our cook, whom you certainly remember, was often sick and wished to leave. Stanisław searched for another in her place. When Mr. K. called once upon me Stanisław asked him about Marcela, whether she was in Jawidz. He answered that she had found a boy and must leave, because she expected an addition [child]. I tried to learn what became of her, according to your wish. I heard that she went to Kock, where she is now, and whether there was or will be something [immoral], people don't know. At any rate, whatever has been, such things are usual. . . . .

I greet you,

G. T.

---

he marries, he tries to get an advance and to become a farm-manager) and being in a superior position and better dressed and educated than the simple teamster has a good chance with the farm-girls. He wears clothes and ties of the most extraordinary colors, uses very strong perfumes, has always a stiff collar, which the peasant wears only on Sundays, uses pomade on his hair and beard, copies pretentious love-letters from special handbooks, etc., and by these means exerts a great influence upon girls.

756 January 24, 1913

RESPECTED SIR: I will give you a little information, whatever I can. [News about acquaintances, such as] Madejska got a boy; the child is dead, and she married some man from Kock. Stefan G. went to the army and did not come back; people say that he married a Russian. Julka B. married Majcher and lives on poorly in the colony. Her brother Stefan is finishing the eighth class [gymnasium]. He is very clever, and will probably go to the university. . . . .

I send you inclosed a letter from your father. I did not give him your address. He comes often, asks about you and complains that you never write to him. You could do him this pleasure. Why, it is always a father's heart [in spite of his faults].

Two months ago the priest of Firlej died suddenly. His parishioners have stolen everything. A woman took even his trousers, and when they were taken away from her she said that she took them as a remembrance of the priest. Such is the culture in our country. . . . .

STANISŁAW L.

my waiter, together with another man. He is a good and clever boy. Wójtowiczówna married Kozioł from Baran [pun: the man's name means "buck," the village's, "ram"] and they get on miserably, for they are both poor. Andzia launches herself powerfully [is dissolute]. Her younger sister Felka is serving here since New Year, but surely she will go home, for she is in a very romantic mood and I am afraid it will happen as with Kukrzycka, who left on January 1, thick [pregnant]. . . . .[1]

G. T.

755 June 5, 1909

Respected Sir: . . . . There is nothing new and nothing good with us. The judge [the manor-owner] is very bad; he coughs worse and worse, he complains about pain in the lungs, and in general he is downhearted and dissatisfied. For, indeed, everything is going on so badly. The spring is awful. Nobody remembers such an other. The flowers and tomatoes froze on May 24, there was such a frost. . . . . My bees are almost wasted through this accursed cold. . . . . Now it is a little warmer, but what of it since there is no rain and the wind blows and dries everything, ... and it is to be expected that the whole summer will be awful. But what can we do against it? We are not strong enough, and we must wait for God's mercy. . . . .

Your father is in good health. I hear that he is plowing the new land. . . . . I see him seldom. Sometimes he comes to learn whether you wrote to me. He asked for your address, but I could not give it to him for I did not know myself, and I think that even now I won't tell him, for perhaps you don't wish it. . . . .

Mr. Zaborski lived in the winter in Oziora's house. He complains much, the poor man, about his wife; he says that he is the most unhappy man in the world. Well, he chose her himself and had known her perfectly, and he was caught in this way. . . . . He has bought a place in Sobolew . . . . built a rather nice house, fenced the garden, moved the beehives. Sobolew looks now very nice from far away, for seen from near, there is enormous misery, stupidity, and ignorance. It does not go forward, but backward, to the oldest savage customs. . . . .

Stanisław L.

[1] Dissolute sexual life in manors is much greater than in villages, partly because the opinion of the community is not so strong, since the community is unstable, partly because the girls are more independent of their families, and, in general, because the opportunity is greater and the control looser.

in a new sphere of intellectual and moral life was present. Unlike Wacław, he has no connection with the peasant life; unlike most of the climbers, he did not get into a class with a strong traditional organization to which he could adapt himself, but into a circle of socialist-revolutionaries whose norms of conduct are still somewhat fluid and whose set of ideas is not elaborated thoroughly enough to organize intellectual life as completely as it is organized by religion among the peasants. Jasiński was a country teacher, and as the schools provide no preparation for change he was probably introduced into a new sphere of life without the proper preadaptation. In this respect he differs from Zygmunt, who introduced himself into a new sphere informally, and through the selection of his personal relations. Finally, the system of Polish national ideals does not seem to influence Jasiński strongly. Note his relation to the Russian socialists.

The matter is quite different with a man of a higher social class who becomes a socialist. He is accustomed to a greater individual autonomy in intellectual and moral problems and is therefore much more able to keep his equilibrium upon the slippery ground of revolutionism. But the peasant's intellectual and moral life has always been so absolutely controlled by public opinion that individual autonomy cannot take the place of social control if the latter is lacking. And Jasiński in this respect is in a worse position than most of the socialists, for he is for long periods isolated from his companions.

It is interesting to observe how the peasant, in a kind of half-conscious moral self-defense, endeavors in every new environment to find some substitute, however imperfect, for the lost system of social traditions; how he tries to have some kind of social opinion upon wh[illegible] he can lean. In the present case Jasiński is in his socialistic ideas a perfect

JASIŃSKI SERIES

The particular interest of these letters is connected with the fact that their author is a peasant who through his instruction and his social and political ideals has gotten completely outside of the peasant class and has degenerated, physically and morally, the double strain of intellectual life and of a complete change of social and moral attitudes having proved too much for him. The question whether a peasant will be able to keep his equilibrium upon a new basis of life depends, of course, upon the rapidity and the character of the change. A peasant like Wacław Markiewicz has indeed an entirely new sphere of intellectual interests and convictions, but through his occupation and his family-relations he retains enough connection with the peasant life to preserve his balance. A man like Maks Markiewicz, or any peasant who by his culture and occupation passes into a higher class, even if he loses his connection with the peasant life, gets into an environment which has a moral and social organization different from that of the peasant class but still strong enough to keep the new member from degenerating. (See Markiewicz series.) Zygmunt, the friend of Walenty Piotrowski, was already prepared to accept to some extent many of the new ideals which were given to him, and continued to adapt himself gradually. (See Piotrowski series.) And again in other cases there are elements in the new environment which were already latent in the old. Thus, for example, peasants and workmen do not lose their moral self-control when belonging to revolutionary parties with a patriotic character, because patriotism is always latent in the lower classes. But in the case of Jasiński none of the factors which are able to preserve equilibrium

in Z. I had trouble with the old mean and abject beast—old Palimoda, who uses different arms against me. As he could do nothing else against me, he slandered me to the mayor, whose boots he licks [in original an indecent expression], because he wants to borrow money from the communal bank. Then he contrived with the manorial spies and wrote a complaint against me to the National Democratic party. In short, it would take whole quires of paper to describe the meanness of such a man-beast. And why? I feel no guilt in myself, unless it is that I wanted the good of the community.[1] In a word, a general reaction had set in; the National Democratic party was victorious at the elections in Poland, in Russia the Constitutional Democrats. But the end is not yet. The devil knows what will follow.

I always want to go to America. I thought I should go surely now, but since I got the place again, I am waiting from moment to moment. But the wish remains to go, to go the soonest possible. If some misfortune befalls me—for different things can happen—I shall go at once. When I come I will send a telegram to you asking you kindly to meet me. Meanwhile please answer me whether it is easy to find a job, what are the conditions—lodging, boarding, work, pay, journey. Could I hold out [at the work] or would it be difficult? Please tell me this, for in our shriveled and impotent Europe a somewhat more energetic man has nothing to do. In order to live, one must have the mind of a goose, the patience of a stone, and be an ox—devout, obedient, polite, etc. . . . .

St. Jasiński

758 Kadnikow, Province of Vologda [Russia]
February 1, 1907

Dear Companion Wacław: Only yesterday I received your letter written in June last year. . . . . As you probably know, after 33 days of liberty—if this can be called liberty—I was arrested once more, and this time condemned to be exiled to the government of Vologda, [the exact place] at the decision of the governor. I passed during this time through different prisons, *étapes*, and adventures, starting from Gostynin, via Kutno, Warsaw, Praga, Minsk, Smolensk, to Moscow, where I remained for a month, lying sick in the central prison Butyrki. There I had the time to get acquainted with many

[1] The story concerns probably some local struggle between socialists and National Democrats and is exaggerated by the writer who seems to be somewhat hysterical and to have a slight mania of persecution.

echo of his party. His very words are typical formulae, repeated identically innumerable times by socialists from the lower classes, particularly by women, who share with the peasants this imitative tendency. Not a single personal note rings in them. It seems as if the peasant wished to extract and to assimilate from socialism everything that is fixed, determined, commonplace, traditional—as if he sought in this fluid milieu the greatest possible stability. And at the same time he adapts himself rapidly to a new socialistic group (to the Russian socialists during his exile), which shows precisely that the choice of his ideas is not determined by rational consideration, but merely by his environment.

757–64, FROM S. JASIŃSKI, IN POLAND AND RUSSIA, TO WACŁAW MARKIEWICZ, IN AMERICA. NO. 764 IS A LETTER TO MARKIEWICZ FROM ANOTHER SOURCE, COMPLETING THE CHARACTERIZATION OF JASIŃSKI

757 ZDWÓRZ, May 17, 1906

DEAR MR. WACŁAW: I don't know what it means. Have you forgotten about me or what? Neither letter nor even greeting. One sees at once that you are changed into an American, occupied only with calculations about your business. . . . . But never mind, I like it. We all ought to break the stupid and simply idiotic European ice and [stop] lying, because no honest understanding can be reached by formalities, only empty lying to one another, and imbecility.[1]

And now I describe to you my lot.

I left the prison of Mokotów after 3 months, on April 20. I have suffered since then real torments. First, I was obliged, against my convictions, to send a petition that my place might be restored to me, for people gave me no job.[2] It is true that they had none. Then

[1] This ideal of absolute sincerity and abandonment of formalities was developed among Polish socialists under the influence of Russian socialism, which was rather strong during the revolution of 1905–6. American life is here viewed through the prism of this ideal.

[2] The sending of the petition was "against his conviction" as a socialist, for the position depended either upon the government, or, more probably, upon the National Democratic and Conservative parties, for it seems that the school was supported by the Polish School Association, which was controlled by these parties.

the capital, and will introduce, first in the east, holy socialism. After it the other nations will follow. A near future will show it to us, and we, the proletarians, shall yet admire and live in a socialist society, which for tens and hundreds of years has been screened from us by all the religions with their gods, and the states with their laws and armies.[1] I am very much astonished that the people there [in America] are still so religious and on the side of the *pops*,[2] at the mention of whom I think of the middle ages and the holy inquisition. Is it so difficult to overcome this with the liberty you have? I don't think so. It is true that English people are very religious, but today this ardor, I believe, is subdued even among them. I should like to write you very much here, but unhappily the lack of space does not permit me, so I limit myself to what I can put here. Do you correspond with anybody? Do you learn? Did anybody write you about me as about a heretic, a godless man, a socialist-revolutionist or even anarchist, whom in the name of God the base old Paliwoda and Bala delivered into the hands of justice?[3] So it goes on in the world, my dear. Not long ago we were almost all together, and today Mil. is in W[arsaw], Zal. and Zold. in Argentine, you in the United States, I in Vologda, etc. What a fate! Does there not stick one general cause of all behind this—liberty and bread!

Yours,

St. J.

759 March 16, 1907

Dear Wacław: I received your letter just now. . . . . I thank you heartily for having . . . . offered me your help in such a difficult moment of my life. I did not write to you sooner, ... first because I did not know your address . . . . and then I believed that upon American soil you had become an idealist of the dollar, as most of the Americans . . . . and I thought that it was not worth while writing. I was very much mistaken; I got a lesson, never to judge anybody beforehand. . . . . It would be better to send money instead of a ticket, for if I should not go I could easily later send the

[1] Socialism became in Poland (still more in Russia) a new and perfectly typical religion. Here this is quite naïvely expressed.

[2] *Pop* is the Russian popular name for an orthodox priest. In Poland it is now an extremely contemptuous word for priests in general.

[3] Here, as in the quarrel in the last letter, we have a trace of the mania of persecution.

Russian revolutionists and parties. On June 30, I was transported to Vologda. Here I was at first designated to live in Solwyczegradsk [far to the north], but I made a petition and the governor sent me instead to Kadnikow, 47 versts from Vologda. Here I have lived for 8 months, without any occupation, like all the political exiles. There are 170 of us here and 70 more escaped. I should have done it long ago if I had money. In the beginning we got from the police 2 roubles 70 copecks monthly for living, but after a demonstration from all the colonies of the province of Vologda they began to give us 8 roubles, then 7 roubles 70 copecks, and today only 7 roubles 40 copecks. Live, as you can, upon this. . . . .

It is difficult to describe what I passed through during this time. I mention that I was near to sending a bullet through my head to end this once for all and to get peace. . . . . But slowly all this cleared up a little, and now I live, giving myself quite up to the study of social and political sciences and of Esperanto. I already read novels and newspapers in this language. I sit the whole day in the cabin, for the cold here, falling to 40° R. below the freezing-point, no longer permits even walking, for the feet and ears freeze. I expect to remain here not longer than 2 months. We shall see what the new duma does, and then I shall give myself amnesty. Even if we get it I could by no means live in our country, for I cannot even earn enough for black bread. I have Paranà still in view, but to go there one must have at least 300 roubles, while I haven't even a single spare rouble. . . . .

Your condition there is now probably good enough, for the strikes have passed and the factories are going full speed. Moreover you are better acquainted with the conditions and you belong to the socialist club. . . . . Could you not do as the Russian proverb says: "Take a thread from everybody in the community, and the naked man has a shirt," and send me a ship-ticket to my old address?

You will say that it is not noble of me to fly from the battlefield. But I answer that the field for activity is as wide there as here, and I can do much more there than here, being half-legal or illegal [under suspicion]. Think and answer me the soonest possible. . . . .

St. J.

P.S. You complain of capitalistic oppression and religious and national separatism. It is true. And therefore the Russian revolution won't limit itself to taking only the liberty of which you know the consequences, but will have the people take all the land, the factories,

be nothing of me. I shall be totally unable to work, and why should I be a burden or a trouble to you?[1] I fear it, and I prefer to die here, for things are bad with me. I live meanwhile, waiting for something, with a companion-runaway who has something like a job, but the gods pity him! What is his life worth? He is a clerk in a bourgeois lawyer's office for 20 roubles a month, and for this he must be everything also in the line of politeness, for [the employer] asks him to reach him cigarettes, etc. It is sad, but true. To be a servant, a

[1] The relation of the two men, the "intellectualist" and the workman, is here perfectly typical for certain kinds of characters and conditions. The high appreciation which the half-educated or uneducated Polish peasant or workman shows of any intellectual superiority (particularly when the latter is not allied with a too marked class-distinction, which makes it then appear too *natural*) and in general the importance which instruction receives in Polish society, makes this kind of relation rather frequent when an instructed man, even if poor, weak, or immoral, comes into a near relation with rich peasants or with workmen. The result is parasitism in various degrees. The case has been witnessed hundreds of times among socialists. The workmen supported their leaders and speakers quite disinterestedly and individually (not from the party-funds). On emigration to the United States, to Brazil, to Western Europe, almost every colony of workmen or farmers has such temporary or permanent parasites—half-instructed "intellectuals" who scorn or are unfit for any physical labor and live at the expense of the laboring people. The case is particularly frequent on emigration, because in that case a man can hardly earn anything by intellectual work, and because the intelligent Poles who emigrate are recruited, with a few exceptions, from the least valuable elements. The attitude of the peasant or workman toward such an intelligent parasite is very curious. It is a mixture of real generosity, compassion, admiration, contempt, calculation, and vanity, in the most various proportions, depending upon the character of the parasite, his conditions, the degree of appreciation which the uninstructed man shows for instruction, etc. In general the uninstructed man (besides purely disinterested motives, which are never lacking) is at the same time glad to show off before his companions his intimate relation with a superior man, and in his relation with the latter is glad to show his own superiority in economic matters while acknowledging the intellectual superiority of the other. Sometimes there are also services which the intelligent man is expected to give in exchange—letter-writing, some teaching, entertainment. But mainly the benefit which the peasant or workman expects to draw from him is the enlightening influence of his company. Unfortunately the same attitude is often assumed toward really useful and intellectual men who come into contact with the peasant and workman—teachers, agricultural instructors, journalists, etc., with the exception of the priests. This is manifested most typically in Brazil, where every man who goes with ideal purposes is treated by the colonists, more or less benevolently, as a parasite, and thus loses the opportunity of exerting a serious influence. In Poland itself this attitude is found wherever the consciousness of the value of instruction is only half-developed.

money back to your parents, and if I should go, I could choose the ship I wanted. . . . . Then write whether I could get some job there, manual or intellectual, be for example, a teacher, a clerk, or perhaps an agitator, a reporter. . . . . If not, I shall direct my eyes toward Paranà, New Zealand, or Australia. . . . . I should advise you to get acquainted with some Russian colony in America and to study the last works of Tolstoi, and many other things. . . . . About any amnesty and in general any peaceful negotiations with the government there is no question at all. . . . . Soon the judgment of the people on the bureaucratic and bourgeois order of things will begin. . . . . Now a moment, a great moment is coming for Russia. . . . .

STANISŁAW JAS[IŃSKI]

760 PETERSBURG, July 21, 1907

DEAR COMPANION: I write this letter to you, but you don't know what is going on at this moment with me. You see, I am in Petersburg. I came here hoping to go abroad, but as far as matters have cleared up during my journey, I cannot go further. I see it myself. I have entirely given up the plan of going to America, for I see myself that there is no place for me either there or in South America. I am totally "out of tune" nervously, my memory does not act at all, I cannot work, I am quite unfit for the struggle for life.[1]

As you know, I was accustomed to live in a different manner, and today I am obliged to adapt myself bitterly. It is painful indeed, but never mind, I count this as life's experience. I am looking for an occupation. It is a question whether I shall find it, and even if I find it there is the other question of the passport.[2] I am lying, but I don't know how long I shall succeed. I have still 10 days' time, and I have some hope, though very small, that I shall get something by lying. If I don't succeed, I shall be obliged to return and to sit quietly [in exile].

Almost one-half of the money which you sent me will be spent. What shall I do if I don't find a place? Will you abuse me very much if I cannot give it back? Say, I don't want to wrong you, but what can I do? I am convinced that if I dare to go to you there will

[1] The breakdown is rather sudden, and the explanation seems to be that however miserable the conditions of life in exile, he did not in fact have to struggle for life, but when suddenly faced by the problem of work he collapses.

[2] A political exile has a passport which permits him to live only in a designated place, and he must report to the police on appointed days.

of Archangel . . . . among Samoyeds, or in the province of Vologda, among Zyrans, for 12 roubles a month. And what a place! I did not even thank them for such a proposal. I will still appeal for protection to one place which is not very promising. If I don't succeed I think of going back to Kadnikow, adding something to the governmental expenses and living there for some time. In the Kingdom [of Poland] it is very difficult to earn one's living, and I don't think at all of going back. As to Galicia, it is a good place to learn, but only for those who have money. . . . . And so, dear Wacław . . . . here it is bad, there it is not good. . . . . Were it not for your money, I would have taken to stealing long ago. I cannot "expropriate" [rob], for I don't know how to shoot. It is bad to be a man good for nothing. As to Petersburg, it is a colossus glittering with gold, but on the other hand terrifying with its misery and drunkenness. There are good things, schools, libraries, but [the influence of] all this is not to be noticed among the public. Everything governmental smells of militarism, everything private of exploitation, cynicism, and frantic enjoyment of life. I don't wish to insult the Russian civilization and culture, but except the samovar and the *rysak* [Russian breed of trotting-horses] nothing else pleased me. These two things merit attention. Well, yes, and the singing. . . . . The song about Stenka Razin . . . . lives up to the present among the people, ... as well as about Pugaczow.[1] The revolution of today waits for precisely a hero like these two. We hope that moment will soon come, for time feeds the masses with hate which grows at every moment and which must express itself at last in terror and destruction. And then, although many will fall, a new world will blossom, and there will be bread enough for everybody, no more misery upon the streets, fewer weak and sick people. I believe in it; this is my religion. I believe in science, the leader of mankind. I believe in the brotherhood of peoples. Let us work as long as we can.

Yours,

St. J.

Don't be angry and don't abuse me if I spent one-half the money without your permission. If I live, I will give it back, and if not, then, although you won't speak well of me, don't speak badly. I kiss you and embrace you.

[1] Leaders of popular Russian revolutions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

slave for a few poor grosz—it does not conform with my character. And whose servant? Some exploiter's.[1]

I will see what can be done, but please don't consider it a crime in me if it happens that I cannot give you [the money] back. I did not wish to cheat you, I intended to do without begging anybody, but unhappily I cannot get on any further. You know me, that I never wished and don't wish any wrong to anybody. Write me, please, how you are succeeding. I am pained. I have paid back the whole amount of money borrowed from the priest. Perhaps I shall pay back yours also. . . . .

St. J.

761 August 3, 1907

Dear Friend and Companion: Two weeks ago I sent you a letter with news of the breaking up of my plans. Now I have received your letter. . . . . My health does not improve, I live in a "black melancholy" or neurasthenia, which expresses itself in a physical weakness of the organism. I am terribly nervous, I get easily tired and every trifle annoys me. When I am in such a state nothing interests me; I can do nothing. Even writing a letter is difficult. . . . . I consulted a physician, he advised me to nourish myself well, but alas! He said that it came from abnormal conditions. I expected to change my conditions by leaving Kadnikow, but it proved that I cannot go further than Petersburg. I have been here for 2 weeks waiting for my passport. I got it by lying, but what is the benefit if I have no job and cannot get any. There are hopes for some 15 to 20 roubles [a month], but imagine whether it is possible to exist upon it, when lodging alone, a corner [in a room with others] costs 5 roubles. I was at the teachers' association. They told me it was possible to get a place as teacher, but near the [North] sea-shore, in the province

[1] It is a peculiar feature of many men with high social ideals in Poland—and not alone in Poland—that while talking and even acting most sincerely in the interest of a high social end, and while making sacrifices for it, they neglect simple duties of honesty in everyday life. They seem to feel exempted from the common morality by the fact of their superior morality. In Russia the same feature can be observed in an exaggerated degree. The source of this discrepancy seems to lie in the loss of moral equilibrium which new ideals, particularly revolutionary ideals, brings to an unprepared and insufficiently preadapted consciousness. The radical and drastic expression of the loss of this equilibrium is found in the conversion of revolutionism into banditism—a situation treated in Vol. IV.

the summer, doing nothing, only walking through fields and forests, I grew somewhat stronger, and in the winter I began to give private lessons. Evidently, being already experienced, I was so economical that I put aside 50 roubles in 6 months. I resigned about this time the hope of going to America, for with such health it was impossible to go. But the opportunity of a great future presented itself to popular teachers in acting as emigrant guides—a second-class passage to Brazil, with the return passage paid if you do not like Brazil. I wrote a letter to the Emigration Society in Cracow which arranged the trip for me, but third class and without the provision for return. I went therefore to Brazil in July, 1911 and I settled in Paranà. Certainly my hopes and rosy expectations were broken and pulverized. Why? The main cause was my bad health, so that after 10 months I resolved to come back to Europe—after having spent 2 months in the hospital of Curityba. My material situation was such that I received help for the journey back from voluntary contributions of companion-workmen. In short, I returned home to die. . . . . After my return [June, 1912] I lay down and I am lying the whole time. . . . . I rise sometimes now, in the summer, in order to warm myself in the sun. I feel better, but I cannot walk, for my lungs—oh, these lungs!—are very small today and I am afraid of the winter—whether I shall hold out. Such is the state of my health. My material state is no better, for besides my debt, about 300 roubles in all, I have 4 roubles in cash, which I would send you at once if you were here in our country. I have no moral right to the inheritance [from my father], and even if I have a legal right it gives me only the possibility of living and boarding with my brother. If I wanted to tear these 150 roubles away from him, I should then be obliged to go and beg my living. So imagine my situation. And my brother himself has not much more besides debts; the misery is the same as in your home. . . . . Write me, what do you want me to do? I know that you have earned this money in bloody sweat, but . . . . I wanted to pay first my debt to those who did not earn it so hard and lent it to me,[1] but, alas, I can do no more. I don't know what you will think of me.

Yours sincerely,

St. Jasiński

[1] It is a matter of "pride" among socialists not to remain under an obligation to a member of a class sharing other convictions, and in this respect his attitude is normal. At the same time his "pride" did not prevent his accepting obligations from this class.

762 KADNIKOW, March 10, 1908

DEAR FRIEND AND COMPANION: I received your letter . . . . which was for me a true surprise, for I thought that you were angry with me for life and death. All this [friendship] is very well, but up to some time [to a certain point] particularly when the question is a material one. Then friends become enemies, and states make wars. I thought it likely that you occupied the same standpoint with regard to me, for I got no answer to two of my letters from Petersburg, except this letter, in which you don't mention whether you received those letters or not. You must know that this question is not yet settled, and even today I am delaying about sending this money back, for in the spring I think of going away from here. . . . . My health is much improved, and one of these days I will go to Vologda and ask the physician . . . . whether I shall be able to go to Brazil, to Paranà. In that case I will go in the beginning of May or at the end of April. . . . . You sit there, silly people in North America, groaning. Go to South America. You will be better off immediately. The Brazilian government . . . . is beginning to colonize, the Poles are very much wanted. A special office is even organized in Warsaw to this end, and our press speaks much about it and even advises [going], although the gentlemen of the National Democratic party shed crocodile tears that our fatherland will remain without working hands. Vive Brazil! You have only to go with a woman and you will get a ready farm with a house and farm-buildings. . . . . The *Macierz* [Polish school-association] has been closed; you know it certainly. As to myself, even if I returned to our country I could get no place, for I remain here under the "special care" of the police. . . . . .

ST. J.

763 WOLA SEROCKA, July 29, 1913

DEAR MR. WACŁAW, COMPANION AND FRIEND: A few days ago I received your letter from which I understand that it is bad with you. I guess you must be seriously wounded, since you lost the ability to work and you lie in the hospital for some months, without knowing whether you will ever recover. . . . . Something like this has been going on with me for 4 years already. At the end of my exile and on the way back I caught cold, I began to cough, but I did not heed it. They called me to the army, I served for 5 months, but I came back so ill that I did not expect to recover. It was in 1910. But during

INDEX TO LETTER SERIES, VOLS. I AND II

	VOL.	PAGE
Arciszewski	II	449
Barszczewski	II	108
Borek	I	317
Borkowski	II	343
Butkowski	II	256
Cugowski	II	89
Dobiecki	II	273
Feliks P.	II	281
Fryzowicz	II	462
Gościak	I	451
Halicki	II	121
Hejmej	II	435
Jabłkowski	II	406
Jackowski	II	30
Jankoski	II	309
Jasiński	II	576
Kalinowicz	II	149
Kanikuła	II	48
Kazimierz F.	II	445
Kluch	II	328
Konstancya Walerych	II	277
Kowalski	II	455
Kozłowski	II	1
Krupa	II	483
Kukiełka	II	303
Łazowska	II	311
Lipniacki	II	567
Makowski	II	80
Markiewicz	I	455
Olszak	II	316
Osiniak	II	469
Osiński	I	394
Pawlak	II	298
Pedewski	II	441
Piotrowski	II	503
Porzycki	II	375
Raczkowski	II	180
Radwański	II	266
Rembieńska	II	249
Rzepkowski	II	139
Sękowski	II	61
Serczyński	II	164
Starkiewicz	II	321
Stelmach	I	379
Struciński	II	332
Terlecki	II	170
Topolski	II	53
Wickowski	II	158
Winkowski	II	283
Wróblewski	I	325

764 March 8, 1907

DEAR MR. WACŁAW: . . . . I am in Ojców. I don't know what will be further. Jasiński writes to me sometimes, but whether he is crazy or something else, I don't understand. Once he wrote me a letter advising me to get from Moscow or Petersburg Russian papers and books—as he says, very good ones. What do I want with them? I am not even yet perfectly well acquainted with the Polish literature. . . . . I try to avoid any mention of politics in my letters to him, for I know that if anybody does not agree with him he is furious at once. Not long ago I got a postcard from him, full of dirty calumnies. In this postcard he calls me a denouncer.

I don't know why. He says that I, together with some society whose activity he conjectures, betrayed him. It fell upon me like thunder from a clear sky. I, who correspond with him and send him a few roubles from time to time, I—to denounce him? And to denounce—what? A few days afterward he writes another postcard in which he does not mention that affair at all. . . . .

W. GOSZEWSKI